

W. D. McDougall

Fifty Years in the

# Peace River Country

and a

Short Story of the

## Alaska Highway

by

V. MAURICE

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Fifty  
**Peace River**

— and —

Short Story of the  
**Alaska Highway**

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**V. MAURICE**

High Prairie, Alberta

1947



                      
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## INTRODUCTION

This book is to have some historic background of 50 years, in the Peace River country. The writer has found out that there are, as far as he knows, only four Klondykers left, who went over the Edmonton—Peace River—Klondyke trail. They are the following men:—

Sydney Travers

Pat Ireland

V. Maurice

Robt. Potts

The book is not meant to be a literary masterpiece, as the writer has never written a book before, but it is a true account, to the best of his ability, for future generations to get some historical facts, which would otherwise be lost if they were not written. The writer's endeavor is to describe the Peace River country in a small way, during its progress of 50 years, in spite of the two world wars during that time.

This is not meant for advertising purposes, but it might be of some use to some adventurous young men. As the north is still a wilderness at the present time, the Government is realizing that it must have more people. There is no reason for these thousands of square miles of emptiness, and no doubt millions of people from crowded lands in Europe would be glad and willing to make their homes here.

The great statesman, Frank Oliver, said, and I heard him myself:

"A land without people is a wilderness, and people without a land are a mob."

\* \* \*

The period covered in this book dates back to my first landing in the United States as a Swedish immigrant boy. It is meant for my own children and describes the Klondyke Trail as I saw it in 1897, 1898 and 1899. It also portrays the progress and changes which have taken place in the Peace River District, covering an area approximately as large as England and France.

I was born in Västmanland, in the central part of Sweden and received about an eighth grade school in education. I worked in my Dad's blacksmith shop in between times.

Emigrated to New York at sixteen years of age, I had to have the consent of my parents to leave my native land. Father disagreed to my leaving but Mother consented and started me out by giving me some money. I also had to get the consent of the priest. I remember him saying, "You'll be sorry when you get out on the Atlantic Ocean." He didn't want the boys to leave.

I went on the train to Stockholm, the capital of Sweden, and from there by boat through the Baltic sea. There they unloaded stock at different parts along the coast of Sweden.

We stopped for a short time in the great Swedish naval port of Callsona, where I remember one of the deck hands receiving his pay from the steward. He apparently didn't get enough money, so he ran behind the steward sticking his tongue out making a long nose. We all thought it was funny.

So finally proceeding, we landed in Copenhagen, the capital of Denmark. There we waited six days while they were repairing the passenger ship Narja. This was an old cattle boat, that Denmark had bought from Scotland.

Copenhagen is a fine city. There was a long wait and I didn't have much money. The language in Denmark was different from Swedish and was difficult to understand.

Four or five of us walked from the main streets and got to the older parts of the city. Near the King's Palace there was a bronze statue of a mounted King, and I remember stepping over the chain around the statue in order to read the inscription.

The Police asked us not to step on the other side of the chain, as it was prohibited. Going back to our hotel through one of the narrow side-streets, from upstairs in one house some Danish maidens beckoned us to come in. Then the Swedish boys called them disrespectful names in Swedish. The window was open and the girls retaliated by throwing the contents of the night vessels at us. Then we ran away.

The name of the hotel was Stockholm, and there they served beer and whiskey the same as Canadians serve tea. As I did not drink I asked the hotel proprietor to reduce the price, but he said it was there, to take it or leave it, and I had to pay the same as the rest. I learned afterwards that a gallon of Danish whiskey cost about fifty cents in Canadian money, so that they could give it away.

During my stay in Denmark I saw only two drunken men. After boarding the ship we sailed across the sea to the capital of Norway, which was called Christiania.

Across the narrow straits Norwegian soldiers were firing big cannons. The inland seas were no wider than the Peace River. At Christiania

Sand, another seaport of Norway, they allowed us to land.

There were about 300 passengers aboard — Swedes, Norwegians, Danes and Finlanders. Several of the emigrants were buying whiskey to have aboard the ship. One Swedish boy called the moon for a Danish sun; and they also called the Danish maidens some nicknames. One Danish boy threw a piece of cheese crust at a Swedish boy, and it cut his face a bit. The Captain came down and scolded us, to make us behave.

The trip over the Atlantic Ocean, for a couple of days was rough. We were on the sea for 12 days before we got to New York. When there was a fair wind they would hoist the sails and use steam as well in order to save coal.

Upon seeing the great statue of Liberty at New York I suddenly began to realize that I was getting into strange land with no friends, unable to speak a word of English and very little money.

While placed in buildings called the Castle Gardens, I saw different races of people, including many Italians who were differently dressed to the northern Europeans.

In the month of August 1895, I went looking for a job, but had no success, and by the end of the month the heat was terrific. Horses were dying everywhere on the streets, and a lot of the people were overcome by the heat.

I then bought myself a ticket to Kein, North Hampshire. I went on a fall ferry boat and then by train. Passed through Boston, Mass., a fine big city.

Arriving at Kein, I met a Swede, who got me a job with a farmer by the name of Mr. Foster, and his wife. They were two old people, very



religious. Here I cut corn by hand, worked long days and got ten dollars a month including room and board. The old people did not understand that I wasn't getting sufficient food. I used to eat raw corn and apples between meals. I remember one day Mrs. Foster showed me a pair of field glasses, knowing that I had been sitting down instead of working at times. Mr. Foster used to tell me to get different tools and things, and then write the names of the tools down, spelling them in Swedish, which was a very good way to learn and remember the names of different articles. I also had an English-Swedish dictionary, so that in two months I was able to speak and understand English fairly well.

After two months I bought a bicycle and rode out 22 miles to Bellvis Falls.

At that time clothing was very cheap. Overalls for fifty cents a pair which would last a year, shirts twenty five cents and up. Suits as low as four dollars, and shoes for seventy-five cents.

I was promised a job at the Bellvis Falls mill in two weeks, so I went back to the farm for two weeks longer.

Even in the New England States they have frosts. One morning at three o'clock Mr. Foster woke me up to haul in watermelon, squash and pumpkin with a wheelbarrow, of course he helped me. I was lucky to get a job with such a nice family my first two months in the United States.

Then I packed my clothes again and with my bicycle I left for Bellvis Falls, Vermont. I went to work for the Fall Mountain Paper Co. The second boss, Mr. Nelson, was a French-Canadian, a very fine and just man to work for. The first

two days I worked at the house splitting and piling wood.

Then I worked in a Sulphide mill, a very unhealthy place to work. We shovelled sulphide in long steam boilers, which was burned. Those fumes were mixed with lime which was melted in big wooden tanks, making a strong acid. This was then pumped into steel boilers that were three stories in height. These boilers were filled with chipped wood that was cooked with steam which made sulphide pulp.

The working men in that section of the mill were nearly all Irishmen, from Cork and Queens-town, Ireland. Nearly all married men with families of eight and ten children. Today you may wonder how those people lived and dressed well as our pay was one dollar and forty cents a week and we bought whisky besides. Vermont was a temperance state so the Irishmen used to cross the Connecticut River to New Hampshire to drink. Oftentimes some of the men wouldn't return to work the next day. The company employed about five hundred men and girls to work in the Paper Machines Department.

I lived in a boarding house called "Fallmonton House." I had a single room and sufficient food at four dollars a week. The landlord and his wife were both Irish and very fine people.

I remember one afternoon in the mill a lead pipe carrying sulphuric acid broke. Mr. Owald, the superintendent, and the president of the mill came down a narrow alley and the acid ran off the flat roof, dropped on square timber and spread over the alley like rain. The high officials were afraid it would burn through their clothes. I ran upstairs and stopped the flow with old blankets.

They then asked me my number, as we all had numbers in the mill, and the boss complimented me.

I filled in and worked in every department of the mill; in the screen room, blow pit and boiler room. I put in a lot of overtime and a lot of Sundays. I managed to bank six dollars every week. After working five months I believed I had money enough. I quit and moved to Boston endeavoring to get a job in a machine shop — and expecting more pay. But I was unable to obtain work in Boston. Being the month of April and also being the Presidential Election many industrial places were closed and thousands were unemployed.

There were big streamers across the streets which read: "Vote for Mr. McKinley, Bryne and Hubbard." As I believe that this writing may be translated into Scandinavian, and that it might help some Scandinavian under certain circumstances I will go on with my story.

In Boston I went into the boarding house on Hanover Street called "Moodies Poarding House." Mrs. Moodie was a Swede. I paid my board six days in advance which was five dollars.

I walked all over Boston looking for a job. The second day I got lost. I asked a policeman my way, he told me the right road but yet I didn't find the way. My mother always told us if we got lost in the city to ask people who were well dressed.

Going down the sidewalk I met a good looking man, wearing real good clothes, and asked him for the right road. He soon discovered that I was a foreigner and he being a Swede, we got friendly, and he hired me for twenty-five dollars a month

as a coachman. He also told me he was working for the Swedish ambassador. He asked me if I had enough money to buy a pair of high-top boots which cost twelve dollars, and I told him that I had enough. He asked me to come along with him to the ambassador's home. We walked for about half an hour and reached the older part of the city. He stopped at the door of a narrow brick house and asked me to change a ten dollar bill for him so that he could pay his bill. As soon as I got my billfold out of my pocket he grabbed it, opened the door and ran up the stairs. I ran up behind him but he swore at me, pulled out a shiny revolver and ordered me to go back or else. Thus I lost about eighty dollars.

I met a man on the street and told him about it but the man did not speak English. After a time I got up enough courage to go up the stairs and found about ten men sewing and fixing up clothes. At the far end were other stairs going down to the back street. I walked for a considerable length of time before I found a policeman. He wrote down my name and cross-questioned me, and believed me too.

When I got back to the boarding house I told Mrs. Moodie the true story but she did not believe me. She said there are a lot of pretty girls in Boston. After that I got down to being really busy looking for a job. I got a job painting window frames on Charlestown Street. I was paid one dollar and twenty-five cents a day, had to board myself and it wasn't steady. I went to the Employment Agency and got a job with Mr. Bingham in South Hamgum, Mass. I was told he was English and very nice, but I didn't like to work on a straight pig farm.

The boss's sister used to bring me pie in-between meals and used to help me speak clear English. I believe she fell in love with me. I worked there for about a month and received thirteen dollars, then returned to Bellvis Falls.

They put me back at my old job the second day after my arrival. I continued to work overtime and Sundays. After paying for my board and clothes I was able to put seven dollars a week in the bank. Considering those times this was very good.

One evening on my way back to work I found a man's unopened pay envelope by the Public Lavatory. The man's number was in it and eight dollars and forty cents inside. The next morning I delivered the pay envelope to the Pay Office and the Pay Master asked for my number.

The next pay day I recieved a ten cent raise a day, this brought my wage up to one dollar and fifty cents a day. About a week later I was moved into the wood room and running the wood splitting machines. There were ten or twelve French-Canadians, the Irishmen called them Canucks.

One of the Frenchmen lost the money I found and they gave me a good reception in English, and talked French among themselves. One Frenchman said in a joking manner that if an Irishman would have found the money he would have drank it up.

One evening after work I went up town and there in the town square was a man standing in a buggy with a gas lamp and he was selling imitation Dollar bills. Dollar bills are good selling and he also stated "Give me a dollar bill and you will win several good prizes, etc." There were about three hundred people around. I had a couple

of dollars, so I gave him one and after some time he bowed to the people and said, "Just tell them that you saw me," and left in a hurry for the hotel. The people who lost money were very cross. It was said that he got away with about six hundred dollars, but the police couldn't do anything about it as he said "Present Me." But I don't believe that game would work in Canada. Anyway the newspapers warned the other towns to lock out for him.

Another evening I went with two other boys across the Connecticut to New Hampshire. There was plenty of beer and lots of bootleg whiskey there. There was a covered wagon with a sign, "Come and See, price 25c." The boys went in and looked, and came out laughing but would not say anything. I went in, and there was a gypsy girl sitting in a chair, whittling a willow with a knife. She said, "Boy, when you whittle, whittle away from you," and up went the girl's legs into the air.

I worked day after day but there were many others unemployed at that time. After working for a considerable time, I was getting ahead and my bank account was growing. Someone began to cut my overalls, the boss gave me a lock, but it was broken and my clothes destroyed again. I asked a night man, Mr. Gryphon, what was wrong and he said that I should quit.

The next day another Irishman said that I had money in the bank and that I should quit. I again spoke to Mr. Gryphon and he took a great interest in me. He showed me around the different machines, and also told me to quit because the Irishmen would get mean, due to the money I had in the bank. There is another family of ten

children that need my job. I told Mr. Gryphon that I would quit and go to Canada and perhaps Klondyke. He said, "my boy, go to Montana where there is big pay, but don't go to Canada. It is run by the English Queen, it's no Good." He also stated that he came from Ireland and he knew.

At first I was inclined to believe him, but later found out that he was wrong and badly mistaken. In the meantime we got a new boss at the Sulphite Mill, Mr. Talbert, and he came from the State of Maine. He dismissed several of the old-timers, the workmen were cross and didn't like him.

In the little town of Bellvis Falls resided Mrs. Hattie Green, said to be the richest woman in the world. She lived in a stone palace, surrounded by a stone fence. One evening some of the boys hid behind the stone fence, and threw small stones at Mr. and Mrs. Talbert's baby carriage when they were passing. It was a mean Irish trick, but luckily no one was hurt.

Some Sundays we used to go up on the Fall Mountain. The boys carried guns and both boys and girls shot at stumps for targets.

That same year President McKinley came to Rutland, which I believe was the biggest town in Vermont. The paper company gave us a day off to see the President. We walked around in a circle to shake hands with him, the poor old man must have been almost played out. The police and detectives had a hard time stopping the women from kissing him.

I understand that he received the people the same way in his second term of office. Some crazy outlaw tried to give him a bouquet of flowers,

had a gun concealed in it, fired it, and the fine old President died shortly after.

Towards fall Mr. Moodie came to Bellvis Falls, he was said to be the greatest Evangelist at that time. He preached in the opera house which was full of people, about a thousand, and I regret that I didn't understand a lot of his service. I saw dozens of men and women crying and wiping away their tears. There were also four University students from the southern States singing Moodie's and Sankie's hymns.

Some time after that I quit the paper mill and went down ten miles to Wallpool, New Hampshire. I got a job working for a blacksmith making horseshoes, and shoeing horses. An old man by the name of Mr. Buckas worked in the same shop. He was a cranky old guy and he scolded me a great deal, so I called him an old bastard. The boss and owner fired me. I didn't realize it was such a bad word. I left again for Bellvis Falls and got a job working at the Fall Mountain Machine shop as a blacksmith's helper. One day I got a piece of sharp steel stuck in my eye. I went to the doctor and he pulled it out with tweezers, gave me some medicine and charged me fifty cents for it.

I remember the time when I wore a cap at the machine shop similar to a military officer's cap and I printed in front of the cap the letters meaning the Fallmount Machine Shop. One day one of the young machinists wiped off these letters and instead printed, which I found out later, a very disrespectful word, but several office girls used to laugh and ask me who did it. The boss told me to clean it off as I had no idea what the word meant at the time.



Some Sundays I used to go to church — the Congregational Church, which the bosses and higher-ups attended. The minister used to read the Good Book and sing hymns. I followed in my book and that was the best way I found to learn the words and correct pronunciation.

I worked hard as a blacksmith for one dollar and twenty-five cents a day. One day I asked the boss for higher pay and he said: "I'll pay you off right now." I said: "Don't you do it."

After working for seven weeks I was getting ready to go to Klondyke in 1897. I took my two hundred and forty dollars out of the bank. I sent my mother forty dollars with ten dollars interest that she loaned me to emigrate on. So this ended my work in the United States and I take off my hat to the Americans that live in the New England States. They are fine people.

I bought a ticket to Montreal and some of the newsboys on the train in changing my money would give me Canadian five cents and call it ten cents American. The two coins looked alike in size and color.

I found a hotel and got a room, so I stayed in Montreal for a short time. I was offered work in two blacksmith shops as a horseshoer, but I refused it. Montreal was then a fine, big city about the size of Boston and it seemed to me that most of the people were French. I noticed that the people on the streets didn't wear such nice clothes as the people in Boston.

On the second day I saw a big parade. Some of the leaders were riding white horses and wore robes and uniforms and carried swords as well. I asked a Frenchman by the hotel who they were

and he told me they were Irishmen. I found out later that it was an Orangemen's Parade.

I then bought a ticket to North Bay and from there I got a ticket to Vermilion Bay, by the Lake of the Woods. There I went to work on the Garden steel gang — mostly shovel work. The boss (Garden) was a big, tall, dark complexioned Swede. We were building a side track which later became the double side track of the C. P. R. Our pay was ninety cents for ten hours work; of course we got our board which was very good, and a bunk car for sleeping.

All work was done by hand, even loading gravel on flat cars. Most of the men came from Winnipeg. They were a mixture of white men, colored and office workers—all broke. Our boss's name was Dynamite Dick and he told us to put more gravel on the shovels. The work was hard on some men that weren't used to it and those that drank a lot. I was well fed and strong. I worked for about two months and got a cheap rate to Winnipeg.

There I got a job working on the Phoenix Bridge Co., an American outfit which was building a large gas tank for the city of Winnipeg.

When working in the winter months, it was very cold — bad winds, blizzards and storms. I boarded with a very nice Icelandic family. They gave me room and board for twelve dollars per month. The Icelandic language was what the Swedes and Norwegians spoke in the time of the Vikings. It was difficult for me to understand it.

One cold day at work while standing on the steel plates, I froze my toe so the boss sent me over to the drug store to be attended; while on

the way there, I froze my nose. I worked every day getting one dollar and fifty cents per day. Winnipeg was a great western city with a population of about forty thousand.

Some of the farm land in northern Manitoba was being settled with Englishmen, a few central Europeans, a good many Americans and several Scandinavians. Winnipeg is an Indian name meaning Dirty Water. Manitoba derives its name from the Cree Indian word Manitos which means God. Saskatchewan means Swift Water. Chicago meaning Chigogoc and means a place where there are many skunks.

While in Winnipeg I was accepted into the Good Templars Lodge which I appreciated very much. I also went to the Swedish church and at other times to the Norwegian one.

When the gas tank was nearly completed I found a job blacksmithing for the Arctic Ice Co. and worked there for a time.

The C. P. R. advertised for men to build a road to the Northwest Territories across the mountains at the Crow's Nest Pass. We paid five dollars apiece for the fare to Crow's Nest Pass from Winnipeg. There were two carloads of men left from Winnipeg. We sat on wooden benches which could be made into beds at night. They were called Colonist Cars. I still believe they were as good as the Pullman Cars.

It seemed as though most of the passengers on the train liked to beat the great C. P. R. railway system. When the train was getting near Calgary, the men got the watchman drunk and when we arrived in Calgary there were only eight of us left. When we got to Macleod, there were only four. By this time I decided I might

as well get off too. I worked a short while in West Macleod and then beat my way back to Calgary which was then a town with about two thousand people. Here I met eastern men, Americans and a lot of others all outfitting to go overland to Klondyke.

I went with an American outfit driving a team for my board while going overland to Edmonton. We followed the old freight trail and the only town on the way was Red Deer.

Edmonton was perhaps smaller than Calgary but had a big Hudson's Bay Trading Post, several stores, free traders, coal mining, lumbering and farming. It was built on both sides of the North Saskatchewan River, the north side being the largest.

When I went to Edmonton I took a contract job. After freeze-up I went to work at the Ed-lines blacksmith shop. After Christmas the Klondykers kept coming by the hundreds and were outfitting, buying supplies and horses. I quit the shop and went to Wetaskiwin buying horses from the Indians and reselling them to the miners. I sold one horse to an American miner for thirty-five dollars. He folded the bills in such a way that he counted one ten-dollar bill twice. I didn't expect this and got beat.

There was a big boom in Edmonton. People came from all over the world and the Klondyke boom started to build up the town. Towards spring I went to work in St. Albert for a blacksmith by the name of Jules Shaft. Some of the Texas men brought in their mules to be shod. They were a bad bunch of animals. We had four of them in the shop and while I was passing by, one kicked me in the rear with both his hind

feet. The kick sent me through the door and half way across the street. A lady passing by screamed, but when I got up and shook myself, they had a good laugh over the whole affair.

The miners built flat sleighs and loaded them with supplies such as heavy clothing and guns.

One party by the name of Helpmon, came from England. There were five or six men and one lady from San Francisco. They had one sleigh loaded with champagne and it was said another one was loaded with whisky. They spent over twenty thousand dollars in Edmonton for an outfit. Four men from Texas bought two big whisky barrels and got a blacksmith to put axles in them and a pole for the team to pull the barrels. They were to be used to roll over muskegs and over fallen timber. The barrels were filled with foodstuffs such as rice, sugar and beans. While going over the St. Albert hill the end came out of the barrel and scattered sugar, rice and beans all over the road.

Another outfit built water-tight wagon boxes. Others used pack horses; many men walked and had their horses packed.

I bought one horse, some oat meal, flour, tea, bacon and a muzzle loading shotgun from "Jack Boots." I left Edmonton on the Queen's birthday, the 24th of May, 1898, and proceeded to the Athabasca River. I crossed the river with a raft. There were no forts, buildings, or settlers of any kind; not even Indians. Following an Indian trail across the Swan Hills, I caught up to a surveyor, "Mr. Chalmers."

The towns of Edmonton and Calgary sent Mr. Chalmers up to widen the trail so that the Red River carts and sleighs could get through.

He lost his life in the Boer War while attempting to save a Canadian boy's life.

Up in the Swan Hills I met an old-timer by the name of Joe Amair, with his wife and four or five children. I travelled with them for about seventy miles. Joe Amair was born a Canadian but lived in the United States. He was a Scout in General Crooks' army, fighting in the American Indian wars. He was also a war veteran in Mexican wars. He and I were great friends until he passed away. He helped many Indians and poor halfbreeds. We'll call him a great French Canadian.

On the maps issued at Edmonton and Calgary the Klondyke was shown as being twice as far as the distance between Calgary and Edmonton.

I then arrived at Lesser Slave Lake, a big lake about seventy miles long and twenty miles wide. My old gun helped a lot to secure part-ridges and fowl hens. The fowl hen is a part-ridge which is dark colored with red spots over its eyes and is very stupid. It would sit on low spruce trees and we used to tie a snare to a pole and slip it over its head. I'm afraid this lovely bird is almost extinct. I have asked trappers and they say they haven't seen any of these birds for years.

Practically all the country was covered with poplar and spruce forests. Following the banks of Lesser Slave Lake I passed through several Indian teepee camps. The natives were friendly but the children were frightened and ran away when they saw the Klondykers.

After walking many days, arrived at Buffalo Bay on the west end of Lesser Slave Lake, where

there was a big Indian and halfbreed settlement, a good many houses and a big Hudson's Bay Post. There also was a free trader, Mr. Beauchamp, a big Roman Catholic Mission with a church, convent and Bishop's house. The native people were well dressed, overalls were unknown there. The Hudson's Bay imported silk pants from England, they cost six dollars a pair and would wear much longer than the white man's overalls. They had cows and lots of ponies around the place. The lake was full of big whitefish and that was the main food.

The Klondykers said that the Hudson Bay Co's. chief factor did not like the white men to come in on their land. Leaving the Hudson Bay Post I went to the Peace River Crossing, following a Red River cart road which the Hudson Bay Co. built for a hundred miles to Peace River.

I met some old-timers, Red River halfbreeds, Charlie Anderson, the head of the Hudson Bay freighters and afterwards a Hudson Bay trader, Bill Knibbs, who helped me for about ten years in fur trading. I also met Joe Maron from the Ottawa River.

After crossing the Buffalo Bay, we came to a Hudson Bay warehouse and a boat landing, also an Anglican Mission. The minister, Rev. Holmes, was noted as the finest Cree speaker, and also Rev. Father Falher in this north country. Rev. Holmes was later made a Bishop of Mooseni. Both of these great apostles have passed away.

I was three and a half days walking a hundred miles to Peace River which is a great river one thousand yards or more wide at any spot.

There was a Hudson's Bay Trading Post, Desjarlais Trading Post, and also four or five

Indian shacks. I hired an old Indian by the name of Arkenom to take me across the river. He was said to be over a hundred years old. We crossed the river in a dugout boat, made out of a huge poplar tree, hollowed out. If one moved a bit while in the boat, it was liable to turn over. My horse swam behind the canoe and the old man wouldn't even let me hold the rope for fear of a small jerk upsetting the boat. The miners put their horses into the river in big bunches and the strong current would drift them about half a mile down stream before they hit the other shore.

I walked up the river for about twenty miles. There were a lot of halfbreed farmers around there. They were descendants of some of the halfbreeds who came from the Red River in Lord Selkirk's time. Others ran away from the North West Rebellion in 1885 and some from a small rebellion in Manitoba in 1860. They had small farms, growing mostly potatoes and some coarse grains. There were no fish along here, but moose were plentiful and it was a great country for fur. Some of the farmers' names I'll put down for memory's sake. There were: Sagamaine, Donkin, McKenzies, LaPratts, McKarester, Tastowich, Bizamair, Bush, and Albrick.

Going on about sixty miles I came to Dunvegan. The country was mostly prairie, but there wasn't one settler in the whole sixty miles. Dunvegan was a big fort. The natives were mostly Beaver Indians, although there were a few Crees. Almost all of them were hunters and trappers and lived in teepees. On the other side of the Dunvegan I caught up to some big American mining outfits with forty pack horses. I



remember the boss had an alarm clock in a belt on his back. There were also a cook, a parson from Montana and a mining engineer from Denver, Colorado. They said he was an Englishman. He was lame and had a hard time catching his horses. The horses knew that they were being caught to do some hard work. I used to help him catch his horses and put the ropes on them. The horses were packed with one hundred and fifty to two hundred pounds each.

When in Dunvegan, Chas. Brimmer, a Scotchman, sold some beef to the miners. They thought it was too dear, so they told Brimmer to go back to Spirit River and kill a big steer, and dry the meat, Indian style, and they would pay three times as much per pound. So the miners being a little bit sharper than Brimmer, put one over on him as the steer when dried, weighed only eighty pounds. Brimmer cussed and swore at the miners.

One morning the mining engineer said the Peace River country was a very fine district, but that old Queen Victoria couldn't walk fast enough to give him the blamed country, as he wouldn't have it.

The following winter when I came down to Dunvegan, I met Mr. Harvey, Chief Factor of the Hudson's Bay Company. One Sunday, Mr. Harvey and a priest drove up the hill, and Mr. Harvey shot a silver fox which was worth three hundred dollars. The priest said it was alright to shoot something on Sunday if you got that much for it. I also saw a little shack in Dunvegan half full of dried moose meat. I saw Indian women packing the meat into canvass bags and stamping it down with their feet in order to

have it pressed flat and tight. An interpreter said they had twenty dried moose in that shack.

A person had to go down a thousand foot hill to get to Fort Dunvegan which was composed of a Hudson's Bay Trading Post, a Roman Catholic Church, a small Anglican Church, and many Indian shacks. All the buildings were made of logs.

The Beaver Indians suffered from epidemics of measles and flu. Most of them died, so Fort Dunvegan has been deserted for many years.

While proceeding towards Fort Saint John, about a hundred and fifty miles away, in the heavy timber we caught up to the government surveyor by the name of McPhee. He cut the trail wider so that the miners' wagons and carts could pass through. He also built bridges over cut-bank creeks, by placing the timbers lengthwise.

After about a day's travelling from Dunvegan, we came to a lake. There were many teepees standing, but the natives were away hunting moose. There was also an Indian cemetery. One of the graves had tobacco, a pocket knife, tea and tea cups on it. An American boy from North Dakota took the knife and some of the tobacco for which the older miners scolded him and told him not to do it again.

We travelled for many days through park land, poplars and willows. One day I camped at a creek which had a big beaver dam. I remember standing up against the dam and shooting two ducks.

About twenty-five miles on this side of Fort Saint John is Pine River and there is a remnant of a Hudson's Bay Post over two hundred years old. The Indians killed the Hudson's Bay man

and stole the goods and I've been told that the place was also burned down by the Indians.

When I crossed the Pine River it was high. I hung on to the horse's mane and he got me to the other side. The miners reported to the Edmonton Bulletin that a young man was no doubt drowned as he was never seen again, but I took another trail and that accounted for my being thought missing.

I rested my horse for about two days at Fort Saint John and left for Nelson River. I soon caught up to a big mining party. The first fifty miles was quite open prairie, but after that it was all spruce and muskeg. One creek which we crossed, had a lot of silver ore floats.

After many days I got to the west branch of the Nelson River which the miners said was about 200 miles from Fort St. John. The country was full of moose and bear tracks.

I camped on the Nelson banks alone and close to my camp about fifty or more poplar trees blew down in one place. In the morning I found that the beavers had cut all around the tree trunks and the trees fell toward the river where the beavers wanted them.

I crossed the Nelson River and after traveling four or five days, the trail ran out and my food was getting short. I then realized that I was still probably a thousand miles away from Dawson City. I turned around and went back to Fort St. John and there went to work for an Anglican Missionary, Mr. Robertson, getting out logs for a new building.

After a few days a mining company from Montana, Mr. Parson and Mr. Cook, hired me for a guide as far as Nelson River. I had to get

my own food and my pay was twelve good horses. So I arrived at the Nelson River for the second time without any trouble.

I then went back riding horseback like a gentleman but my horses would stray away in the night so I was delayed and began to get hungry. One buckskin horse got stuck in a muskeg so I shot him and used one hind quarter for food; part of it I dried the Indian way.

When I got back to Fort St. John, I went to work for Mr. Robertson along with a fellow from Halifax by the name of Burgess. When fall came, he put us to work cutting hay by a lake which was called after me "Barney Lake." The first land surveyors changed the name to "Charlie Lake."

At that time one of Calgary's stockmen drove up fifty fat steers to be sold in Klondyke but the owner went away, so the minister had to look after them. They finally all drifted away and were never found.

One early morning there were geese on the lake and George loaded my muzzle loading gun with buck-shot, but the geese flew away and we didn't get any of them. The gun was left loaded at the camp and in about two days the minister came up and asked us to go and look for the steers. So we took the gun along and some bread in our pockets and in the winds I carried the gun on my shoulder as I had seen Indians do. Burgess saw a partridge so we followed it and George told me to put the cap on the gun. As we were running after the partridge to get an open shot at it, a root caught my pants and almost tripped me. Overhead were willow branches that caught the hammer of my gun and the shot went off. Burgess fell down and cried out: "You shot me!"

Then we both cried and Burgess asked me if I had a pencil. "I shall write that we were the best of friends and that you didn't mean it." By that time we had settled down a bit, and I pulled his shirt off, but couldn't find any marks on him. As I had carried and used a gun since I was twelve years old, I immediately decided to throw my gun away. I broke it against a tree, threw away the moosehide sack which held the shots and my powder horn. I vowed not to touch another gun for twenty-five years and I have kept that promise. I hope no one else carries a gun on their shoulder while walking through heavy bush.

The minister kept us hunting for horses every morning. In order to climb the thousand foot river bank, he gave us a new pair of moose-skin moccasins every day.

The Calgary stockman lost all his oxen and we never did find them again, but the following years after Jack Ryan was giving moose meat away, it was said to have been beef. The same Jack Ryan was on the Nelson River trail with two pack horses. He always walked and carried a rifle and seemed to be scared of strangers. The other miners said he came from "The Black Hole." I believe it was a region where American outlaws stayed in hiding.

In November, Mr. Robertson discharged us as there was no more work. One American came down from Fort Graham and hired me to work for him for one dollar a day and board. He had a good, well bred horse from Calgary which Mr. Cashman, "Brick Brack Trader," loaned him to go to Edmonton with. So I took four of my horses with flat sleighs. The snow was about sixteen inches deep and it turned very cold. The doctor

used to leave the inkstand full of mercury every night and for eight mornings it was frozen solid. The second day from Fort St. John I froze my big toe. I had a new pair of moccasins on but I put too many socks inside of them and my feet were too tight. We had a small tent and a sheet iron stove which made us very comfortable at nights. The same evening that I froze my toe, the doctor, Mr. Lynn and I made a pair of moccasins out of a four-point Hudson Bay blanket, doubled each part and I was never cold after that.

We did not go many days walking. My horses played out so we had to leave them, but the pure bred horse stood the trip all the way to Edmonton. I walked about 800 miles in the snow and when I got on the bare ground near Pembina River near Edmonton, my blanket moccasins started to wear out at the heels.

The doctor bought some oatmeal in Slave Lake to feed the horse. Getting into Edmonton about two days later, I pitched my tent about where the T. Eaton Department Store is now. I cut wood around the tent and fed the horses at the livery barn to have them in good shape for spring. I made a good deal with the boss of the livery barn to look after him, and then I went to look for a job.

Finding no work in Edmonton, some farmers offered me five dollars a month, telling me the best of men only got from five to eight dollars a month. I did not accept their offer as the doctor would give a dollar a day when he got back from the States. I stayed around the Grand Central and Queen's Hotel to keep warm. Finally I got a job at Edlines blacksmith shop shoeing horses. I rolled up my tent and lived in the

Edmonton Fire Hall, free of charge, but I was subject to call at night in case of fire. There was also an elderly man from Ontario who stayed in the fire hall too. We were to get fifty cents an hour for attending a fire, but we stayed there three months and never had a call.

A new newspaper started up in Edmonton by the name of the Edmonton Post. Sometimes they had a hard time to find men to work for them, so they would send for the firemen to turn the crank that supplied the power to run the printing press. For this work they paid us fifty cents and sometimes a dollar.

While working at Edlines shop I got twenty dollars per month with board. Working with me was a man by the name of Mr. Latter, an ex-Mounted Policeman. He was an Irishman and a very fine and smart man, but he did not like English lords and dukes and landlords of Ireland. In later years I met some of those people and I believe Mr. Latter was wrong.

I worked hard all winter and in the month of March, Dr. Nicholas and Mr. Lynn came back and we started on a long journey with several other miners. It was called the second year of Klondyke. The doctor bought another outfit of three horses and we left Edmonton for Athabasca Landing, a hundred miles north of Edmonton, where there was a Hudson's Bay Post and two traders, the Ikgonnu Hotel, a livery barn and several halfbreed shacks. We travelled on the ice, and after six days we came to Lesser Slave river, and at Moose River were two Klondykers, Donaldson and Barkley. Barkley was related and connected with the Barkley Banks of England. They had a shack and a bunkhouse and stables for miners and freighters. The Hudson's

Bay Company and other traders had by this time started to haul freight through there from Edmonton to Peace River.

Proceeding on, we arrived at Lesser Slave Lake, the largest inland lake in Alberta. It was full of whitefish trout, jackfish, gold eyes and pickerel. We camped in the Indian shack of Too-Tees Cardinal. They gave us ten big jumbo whitefish for twenty-five cents.

The dogs stole twenty pounds of lard from the doctor. There were trained husky dogs everywhere. After five days we arrived at the west end of the Lesser Slave Lake. There were many fur traders, miners, trappers, freighters, half-breeds and Indians. They didn't like to be called Indians, but calling them half-breeds was fine. Several of them spoke French and some spoke English. There were also two Mounted Police, who kept the whisky traders down.

The Peace River country was then in the North West Territories and a good friend of mine, Col. Jim Cornwall, was one of the biggest builders in it. He built the first steamboat ever put on Lesser Slave Lake and called it the "Midnight Sun." He carried the Christmas mail over the Swan Hills on foot, about 300 miles. It takes a whole train to cover this now. Jim and Mr. Breen were traders and as the Klondykers returned and built cabins and settled in the Peace River, they helped them all by giving them both credit and work.

We left Slave Lake for Peace River. We travelled all the way from Peace River to Fort St. John on the ice. The horses were getting tired and we had to walk all the way. Horse feed was scarce and for the last hundred miles we walked



through water, sometimes knee deep. At Fort St. John there were a good many miners wintering. Some others were at Charlie Lake and some at Fish Creek. A bad sickness, called Black Leg, struck the miners. Two of them died and several were crippled up and unable to walk. The doctor and I went out to search for horses we left at Jim Rose Prairie. The ice on Peace River was honeycombed and I dropped into a hole but put my arms out and stopped myself from going under the ice. I thought I was a goner. I could see my past life in a flash. The current in the water shook me down and then pushed me up again. I had a pack on my back containing a rope, an axe, and food. The doctor handed me his gun barrel and pulled me out.

It was an exceptionally bad winter. We had four feet of snow and then a strong chinook wind melted most of it. This was followed by a heavy frost which formed a heavy crust on top of the snow. The crust was so hard that the horses could not break it by pawing for the grass. I lost eight horses and only had a little pinto stallion left. The timber wolves were also bad. The Indians, the Hudson's Bay Co. and the traders lost all their horses.

Many Indians were camped on top of the hills and some near the Hudson's Bay Co. There was also a small half-breed trader and an American by the name of Mr. Burbank, who came from Connecticut River, Vermont, where I used to work. While we stopped in Fort St. John to rest and feed the horses, I cut wood and cooked in the camp for sick miners. Old Mr. Foster from Edmonton was very sick, but the doctor managed to save him.

After the break up of the Peace River many miners left on rafts and boats to go back. Some miners that wintered at the Fort were mining gold in the river. Mr. Sutherland, a Scotchman; Jack Ryan, an American; Mr. Ogilvie from Montreal; Big Jake, a Swede from North Dakota; Dr. Kennedy from South Africa, and others, all mined on the river. Big Jake had the most gold nuggets which he kept in a small baking powder can. Some said he won most of it playing poker.

In Fort St. John there was an Indian scare. The Beaver and Dog Rib tribes did not want the white man to come and stay in the country which they said was theirs. Some miners stole caches of food, snowshoes, etc. which were hidden in trees. On top of the hill at Fort St. John there were about seventy-five buggies, wagons and Red River carts left by miners. The Indians put the whole works down the hill and I could see afterwards broken wagons and equipment for about six hundred feet down.

All of the white men, with the exception of the doctor, myself and our partner, left at night. We had to stay, but the Indians didn't do any harm to us.

While the doctor was prospecting with a pan, he found some colors in the creek and put me to work building a sluice box. The gold proved to be false, flat flakes and no good.

Mr. Cashman left with the others at night on the boat. In the early spring onions grew up on the steep hills in St. John and we ate some of them. When the grass started to grow the doctor decided it was time to leave, so we left Fort St. John and went to Fort Grame across the Rocky Mountains. The distance was said to be one hundred and fifty miles.

We followed the banks of Peace River the first day out and came to Ross Flats. There was a large Indian cemetery with funny looking houses over the graves; some with many colored ribbons.

The following day we left the Hudson Hope trail. We travelled in the Cash Creek bottom for a long distance and saw many moose and bear tracks. There was a stretch of about fifty miles of prairie land in the foothills. I am told now that all that part of the country is settled by farmers, ranchers and stockmen.

Along the way we found where a miner had died. There was a big bolder for a tombstone with his name cut in it. He was from Michigan.

We fished in the river and the mountain trout would grab for the hook as fast as we put it in the water. We crossed the river in belly-deep water but it being a warm day, the clothes soon dried on us.

We followed the trail for about eight days and came to the mountain pass known as Moodie's Trail. Mr. Moodie was a North West Mounted Police officer, who was sent by the government to blaze the trail for the miners.

When we came to the first summit it was blocked by snow twenty feet deep in the month of July. We camped there and rested for about three days. The pass was above the timber line so the doctor decided to go back to Edmonton and go by boat from Seattle to Klondyke. He also said if I wanted to stay, he'd give me the well bred horse and pay me. So I decided to stay and he gave me a check for \$150.00, the horse and an order on the postmaster in Edmonton for twelve dollars.

I started to tramp a trail through the deep

snow. It took me all day to do it, but my two horses never stepped off the trail, so then the doctor came on and two of the Manitoba farmers.

After several days' journey I came to Ospeeka River. It was a big and swift river. I camped there for two days; had good feed and picked a nice place to raft the river. I cut one big, dry spruce in three pieces and sharpened the logs at the front. Then I put my horses over a cut bank into the deep water. I threw stones and clubs at them and they swam across.

My raft was made with a round pole on top tied down to the logs with a rope. I was used to rafts and swift rivers. After my trees were cut, it was no time till I was across the river.

I didn't have much flour, bacon, tea or sugar, about enough to last me a month. But about that time Mr. Johnson and Mr. West came with twelve pack horses, and started to build a big raft with a sweep oar behind and an oar on each side. It was built in a lumber jack fashion. They asked me to go with them because they were scared of my raft, but I refused to go because it was fun for me to raft rivers.

Where I placed my raft the current came to the cut bank and then across the river to the other side. I told them to follow the current and when they came close to the shore, to jump off the raft and snub it.

The doctor was captain on the raft, Mr. Johnson and West on the oars, and old Lynn looking on, but they got confused in the river and the raft turned around and around and kept drifting towards the bend of the river where I couldn't see them. The raft struck a big wood pile and partly upset. They lost over half the goods but

were lucky to save their lives. It was said there was a big canyon just a little lower down.

Mr. Johnson had sold his farm in Manitoba and had his money in a sack which was lost in the deep water. I cut a fairly heavy pole, flattened one end and used it for a paddle in deep water. After crossing the river I saw Mr. Johnson and he told me he had left a ten pound pail of onions on the other side. He said that I could have them if I could get them. I tied up my raft and went across the river. Got the onions and also an axe, and from that time I cultivated a taste for onions.

While starting out on horseback, I came to the second summit. There was another mountain pass and big slow slides. I managed to get through by travelling along the creek bottom.

On the second summit above the timber line a snow slide, which was about one hundred feet wide, cut a two-mile lake in two. The outlet of the lake runs one way and the other ends runs in the opposite direction.

The trail to Fort Graham had three mountain summits to cross and for about forty miles I was continually going up and down. I got to be so good at rafting that I would not bother to swim with horses any more.

On coming to a river or small creek I used to cut a long pole and measure the water on horseback. If the water was deep I would build a raft in short time; besides I didn't want to get my flour wet. Flour sold at twenty-five dollars per hundred at Fort St. John and fifty dollars at Fort Grome. Bacon, sugar and salt cost one dollar per pound.

Between the second and third summits the

miners said that there had been an earthquake two years before. For about a mile wide and as long as I could see, the spruce trees were all leaning heavy and broken one way.

I looked for gold in every creek and found colors everywhere but the miners told me there wasn't enough to pay. There were all kinds of floats in the creeks, loose stones containing gold, silver, copper and nickel.

After walking for several days, I arrived at No. 3 summit. The passes were over the timber line and from there I could see the Peace, Omineka, Ospeka and Parsnip rivers. These rivers were at least sixty miles away.

After going through the pass I could see where the trappers had cut large trees and set their martin traps and judging from the length of the stumps, the snow must have been very deep as the stumps were half the lengths of the trees.

After several days' journey I came to the Finley River. This river is the largest tributary of the Peace River and is a glacier stream of smooth running water for sixty miles. Across the river are Caribou Mountains at Fort Graham.

Where I came to the Finley River was near Fort Graham which is a small, well built Hudson's Bay Post and there were five or six Indian tents and teepees. The natives did not live in log shacks but used brush tents and teepees the year round. These were a tribe of the Slave Indians. The supplies came in by canoes using many portages and in many instances packed on men's backs and finally down the Parsnip River and up the Finley River until they arrived at Fort Graham.

Often on my travels in the north I have met men stating that the Hudson's Bay Company had robbed the Indians and halfbreeds as they would have to stack up beaver skins the height of a muzzle loading gun before they could buy a gun and also getting the furs for little or nothing.

I have been in many Hudson's Bay Posts and find their prices on goods reasonable. The natives and trappers would swear by the Hudson's Bay Co. On this trip I visited the following Hudson's Bay Posts: Fort Graham, Fort St. John, Dunvegan, Peace River and Slave Lake.

I have talked with many old Indians who told me the Hudson's Bay Co. had clothed and fed them the year round, during their life time.

From there I crossed the Finley in a boat and carrying a pack on my back, followed a blazed trail up the mountains to where a Vancouver man by the name of Mr. King, had discovered a mica mine. There I staked a claim. The mine was above the timber line but at that time it was not developed. The seam of mica was leaning at quite an angle and was about three feet wide. I pried some out about the size of a large window pane; this sand mica was found between rusty, rotten stones in a kind of sandstone formation. The pieces which I pried off with my axe had to be broken before I could get them into a hundred pound flour sack. The sheets could be split with a table knife almost as thin as heavy paper. I was running short of food. The nights were very cold and I had only one blanket, so I walked down hill back to the fort, a distance of about twenty miles. I traded my horses for a boat and some food and started down the river. There were large river channels in the Finley which the miners called sloughs. After getting into one

of these, you would run two miles before discovering your mistake; then you had to go back to the channel.

I met some miners and they informed me that down the river about sixty miles were the Finley rapids and they told me to be sure and portage as these rapids were very dangerous. It took me about two days to go down the river and in many places I encountered large whirlpools where it was very difficult to get the boat through. At the rapids I made a portage which took me a whole day to get across. A few days before an Indian was drowned in the rapids when he tried to run them. I saw several deserted miners' cabins and some newly dug graves where miners were buried who died of scurvy or black-leg as some people called the disease.

The Parsnip and Finley rivers join the Finley rapids and this is the starting point of the Peace River.

Floating down the Peace for many miles, I saw deserted cabins and there was Mount Sullivan, a large mountain of low grade free milling ore. Several prospecting holes were cut in the rock by Mr. Pratt's Mining Co. of Chicago. There wasn't anybody living here, but a lot of equipment, tools and blacksmith supplies were left.

Further down the river there were many large whirlpools which would take my boat and swing it clear around. It took lots of hard work to get through them. Later on I came to the Parle-peu rapids (a French word which means "talk little"). There I tied some flour, bacon, matches and an axe on my back and let the boat down with ropes; it nearly upset a couple of times. Going down the Peace I passed between high mountains where many large and small streams



emptied into the river. The scenery was beautiful. At the mouth of Otter Tail river I saw a tent camp with two men. One was a mining engineer by the name of Hinkley, who had found many mineral floats of what he called silver-grey copper and said he was going up the river to find the mother lead. This man lost his life in crossing the Half-Way river on horseback. I was sorry I was not there to build him a raft. Mr. Hinkley gave me a boat, a rocky mountain canoe, which he said cost him two hundred dollars.

From there I came floating down the river to Gast House. Here the river looks like a lake and in the canyon it is very narrow. The Gast House was a trading post built by twelve foot Davis and Bill Gast. These buildings were old and falling to pieces. The men were great old-timers. I camped at Gast House that day and the next day I took a long pole at the head of the canyon, tied a rock at the back of my boat and pushed it down the canyon. I also pushed the big boat down. I thought I could get one of the boats sixteen miles<sup>below</sup> the canyon. I went up on a high hill and saw the small boat hit a big rock in the middle of the river. I could see the lumber flying in all directions as the boat was smashed to pieces. It was at this spot that in later years the footprints of pre-historic animals were cut out.

I put my blankets, food, etc. on my back and started on foot over the portage. As I kept walking the pack was getting heavier and every time I rested I lightened it by throwing stuff away, but not any food.

This country is in the foothills and underlying with coal. This coal is the same as Penn-

sylvania and English coal which is used mainly for blacksmithing purposes.

Arriving at Hudson Hope, I did not find anybody there. I built a small raft and drifted down to Fort St. John about sixty miles. I did not have any food so I presented Johnnie Codett, the manager of Hudson's Bay Co., a cheque for \$150.00 and an order on the postmaster, a Mr. Taylor, at Edmonton. Codett would not accept the cheque and afterwards it turned out to be no good. As I was getting hungry, I asked for a job and he wanted to know if I could hoe potatoes. I told him I could because I have had considerable experience at this kind of work. After hoeing the small potato patch he said I put too much earth on and told me to go back and remove some of the earth. After I did this, he said I took too much earth away and told me to put some back again. I got cross then and asked him to give me some wood to chop. For my work he gave me matches, flour, tea and bacon which I believe were worth eight times more than the work I did. After leaving Johnnie Codett I floated down to Fort Dunvegan.

The following winter in 1899, I did a good deal of work for Mr. Codett, who was then the chief Hudson's Bay trader at Peace River. He was a highly respected man and acted as Justice of Peace in later years. His initials being J. P. he used to sign his name J. P. Codett, J.P.

After drifting down a long distance, I went to work for John Harris in Shaftbury settlement clearing land and from there I worked for the Anglican Mission for Roy Curry on the Anglican farm. Government officials arrived in Peace River in 1899 to pay the first treaty. I believe later

5 Governor Laird was at the head of the Mission. Father Lacombe, North West Mounted Police officers and others acted as interpreters. Several of the natives became Indians and took treaty. The chief got twenty-five dollars and a uniform a year; the others got five dollars a year. Sometimes full brothers would take treaty and others would take script; those who took script were classed as white men. This script was 340 acres of land. They sold these to Mr. Secord and other men from Edmonton from \$75.00 up to \$130.00 apiece. It was said later that buyers of script made barrels of money and Mr. Secord became a millionaire.

When the treaty was paid in Peace River the Anglican minister sent me up the river to look after the children and cows, while all the older people were away for their treaty. Some time afterwards I visited the same family on a Sunday. They had two daughters and a young Mountie used to visit the elder one. While she was churning butter one day in a barrel churn and talking to the young policeman, the top of the churn got loose and on turning the crank all the cream spilled out on the floor. The mother grabbed a broom and we all ran away in different directions. Butter was selling for a dollar per pound and in Edmonton it was ten cents a pound and over. This same young policeman in later years was in command of the whole Manitoba Police Force, and a boy from this same Taylor family, who was born in Peace River, became a United Church minister.

In the fall of the same year, Ross brothers of Edmonton, sent down Ibotson to sell out the McKinley flour mill, horses and machinery. I bought two horses for \$35.00 at the sale. The

English mission paid me \$15.00 per month and board. I was glad to have this work as food was very expensive and hard to get. After freeze-up, when there wasn't any more work on the farm, I went to work for Allie Brick, who was born in Peace River and was the son of an Anglican church minister. He was married to a halfbreed or native woman who did not speak English, and while staying with this family I learned to speak the Cree Indian language. There was no English spoken in the house. Allie Brick was the first member elected from Peace River in the newly formed Provincial House. This seat he held for several terms.

A man by the name of Wm. Carson, who was a Hudson's Bay contractor, bought the McKenzie flour mill and turned it into Bricks Store. I worked for Mr. Carson hauling water for the boiler with my team, for which I was paid \$2.00 per day. I worked for Mrs. Brick for my board by cutting wood and hauling ice for the house. Mr. Brick went to Edmonton for freight for the Hudson's Bay and the trip took over two months. Food was very scarce and prospectors had bought all the Hudson's Bay food. The floods which started in the early summer, flooded all the creeks and roads. Pack horses could not carry very much from Slave Lake, as they could only pack enough food to last a day or so at a time.

Mrs. Brick fed us on boiled wheat, three times a day. The latter part of the winter turned very cold and after my work was completed at the mill, I took a contract to cut poles on the big island about five miles away. One cold morning I cut my foot. The axe caught a twig over my head and went deep into my foot, also cutting my moccasin and stocking. However my foot did

not bleed a drop as it was fifty below zero. When I arrived at Mrs. Brick's house and got warm, my foot began to bleed very badly. Mrs. Brick got very scared and wanted to run to the English Mission for medicine. I put a handful of flour on the wound and wrapped in in bandages and the cut was all right. Later I caught cold in my foot and a medicine woman, Mrs. McKinley, took some bark and roots which she chewed and put on my foot; that relieved the pain.

My horses being fat, I decided to go to Lesser Slave Lake and get some freight for the Hudson's Bay Co. They gave me a load of half sides of bacon. The halfbreed did not like to load with bacon as there were hungry Indian dogs for a hundred miles distance. They would eat through the planks and get the bacon in the night. This loss would be charged against the freighter.

In those days there were no houses and we slept under the trees by camp fire and had to carry oats and hay for the teams. I hauled a ton and received \$15.00 for my freight. Going up a bear hill, I had to carry some of the load on my back. Later I traded my sleigh for a wagon and going up the old Grouard trail about eight hundred feet, was a half day's work in hauling freight. Camping on the banks of Hart River for dinner, I built my camp fire between the cart wheel tracks. After making my tea, my horses got away from me. After chasing them for about two miles down the road, I finally overtook them and stopped them. When I came back, the fire had got away and was burning in a slough. I took off my coat and started to beat out the fire. I worked until I was played out but could not get it under control and it burned half the summer. The country was covered mostly with pop-

lar and willows but some good spruce timber was also burned. This fire cleared what is known as Nampa and Juda country. The fire burned as far as Kaufman Hill and a lot of the land was cleared into prairie. This district is now thickly settled.

I finally arrived at Lesser Slave Lake which was then a land of plenty with jumbo whitefish selling from ten to twenty-five cents. Mr. Beaton, Hudson's Bay manager, hired me to haul sawdust, wood and ice. Later in the summer I worked for Mr. Reid, Hudson's Bay chief factor. He was a bachelor and I worked as a cook for \$20.00 per month. I also did some painting and other odd jobs between times. Close to the manager's house lived Joe Mearon. He was a blacksmith and a horse trader. He did not get along very well with the Hudson's Bay chief, so in order to bother his neighbor Mearon, he opened his blacksmith shop door and had two gramophones playing in the doorway. These were the first gramophones I had ever seen. Reid offered me a dollar to go and throw them into the river.

After working here for awhile, I started out prospecting again for the Fort Graham mica mines. Mica was a high price and was used for electrical work and by the Americans in their battleships. When I arrived in Peace River a big mining outfit caught up to me. A Mr. Roman from Chicago, who had ten horses and three men, hired me as a guide to take them as far as Injinika river where placer mining had been discovered and reported as being very rich. This was in the year 1900. After travelling about two hundred miles, we arrived at Fort St. John. I asked for more flour and ~~bacon~~ to be brought but the boss did not get any. Leaving Fort St.

John on the Klondyke trail, we came to a place where timber fires had burned for great distances. I lost the trail which was called Moody's trail, but found another one known as the Frenchman's trail. This trail was blazed and cut out by a government engineer by the name of Ogilvie, fifteen years before. The distance by this route was about 75 or 100 miles longer to Fort Graham. It was a much easier trail to follow than the other one as it did not cross the mountains and hills but followed the flat lands where there was no snow.

It took us thirty days to get to Fort Graham so Mr. Roman ordered us to be placed on Cuban American soldiers' rations. We were hungry most of the time and no game was seen. The boys used to steal the meal and drink water out of the creeks.

At Fort Graham I was dismissed and Roman did not pay me because, he said, we got on the wrong trail. I crossed the Finley river here with my horses and after two days came to the mica mine. There were so many deep cutbanks here that I could not use my horses, so I went ahead on foot with a pack on my back. On August 22nd we had a heavy snow storm. I brought out some mica and left for Fort Graham. I was afraid of losing the trail in the snow as it turned out that the snow did not melt that fall.

In Fort Graham I offered my two horses to the Hudson's Bay Co., so I could float down the river. The Company offered me only \$10.00 for two horses, so I decided to ride horseback to Fort St. John. I had \$100.00 in my pocket, but all I could get at the post was brown beans and sugar. On the way back to Fort St. John I lived on beans and sugar for two weeks. There was

snow in the mountains but not in the deep valleys. When the beans got sour, I put sugar on them. In the morning I would cook up the day's supply of food. In later years while telling Dr. McIntyre of High Prairie about this trip, he said I must have had a cast iron stomach.

I packed one horse and rode the other one. Coming to a muskeg, the pack horse would wander off. After I found him, I would be lost and could not find the trail again. I was short of food and there was prospect of me eating horse meat again. I remembered miners telling me that a horse does not get lost, so the next day I put the pack on the other horse, an old buckskin. I took a willow switch and hollered at him; he started out and I followed him. I saw him put his nose to the ground and he soon found his own tracks. We came out on the trail in half a day. In one deep and narrow cutbank creek some Indians had put three poles lengthwise to walk on and my horses crossed on these poles.

After leaving Fort St. John I arrived at Lesser Slave Lake. The Catholic Mission had built a new sawmill and I went to work there. (Lesser Slave Lake was later called Grouard). I also worked in the blacksmith shop. Old Bishop Clutte had several badly worn grubhoes, I fixed them up nicely and that gave me a name among the Indians as a good blacksmith which came in handy later on. The old Bishop grubbed all the spruce around the Mission himself. He said the heavy work kept him in good health.

The following winter I went freighting with my horses but after buying hay and oats and my own food, it did not turn out to be a financial success. In the spring, when the ice melted, I went to work on the Hudson's Bay York boats



running to Athabasca Landing, about 200 miles away. These York boats were about eighty feet long and eight feet wide and were built by Orkney Island Scotchmen. They carried ten or twelve tons of freight and had big right oars and a sweep behind to steer them with in the rivers and rapids; also a sail and rudder for the lake. They carried a crew of ten men. On the way coming up stream from Athabasca Landing, we used long ropes as tracking to pull the boats with. Four men worked on the tracking line for an hour, then we changed and four fresh men went on the line. We walked on stones and waded creeks, and were wet all day.

About fifty miles up the Athabasca river we tracked a bear and two cubs. I had an old muzzle loading gun in the boat. Somebody had jumped on it and the barrel was bent at almost a square angle. I placed the barrel in a forked tree and straightened it out as much as possible. Johnny Stoney took the gun, put a round lead bullet in it and followed the bear tracks. He killed the bear and one cub. The bear had a rawhide snare around its breast. The Indians used this kind of snares for bear and moose. It was said that at Lac la Biche lived an old Indian, who used to run after a moose night and day until the moose was played out and then he would shoot it with his bow and arrow.

After fourteen days we returned to the post. The food on the boat consisted of tea, bannock and bacon, but no sugar. We were paid twenty dollars a trip in trade, but not in cash. Later on I made two trips to Bredens on Jim Cornwall's boat as cook. The breeds used to fry the bacon to a crisp, put the meat on a stump and dip the bannock in the grease. The captain gave us a new

pair of macassins every morning for next day's work. The breeds were a happy bunch of people; they sang and drummed day and night. They did not speak English, but being able to speak their language, I got along very well with them. Athabasca Landing started to grow into a nice town. The hotel was selling whisky and the breeds would have their money until they could buy a keg or two of whisky and would keep drinking it for days on their trips.

The Hudson's Bay Co. and the big traders finally built steamboats. Breden and Jim Cornwall built a side-wheeler and called it the "Midnight Sun," for the lake run and also a stern wheeler for the river. The freight was unloaded in shallow water at Shaw's Point, about 10 miles from the post. Jim Cornwall went to Ottawa and got \$7,000.00 from Mr. Sifton to build the Peace River road. This road made it possible to get food through to Peace River so the people would not go hungry again. Twelve men with two teams went to work on the road, cutting and widening the present road and building bridges. We had a good boss, Mr. John Fraser from Edmonton. In our gang there were six white men and six halfbreeds. We worked all summer and were paid a dollar and a half per day.

I regret to state that at present there are only two of the old road crew left, Sid Travers and myself. Sid is an Englishman and his word is as good as gold. In later years he was a fish inspector and game warden. He is now retired at the Pacific Coast.

In the following spring of 1903, I went to Edmonton to buy blacksmith tools. Messrs. Breden and Cornwall had already given me some heavy tools on time. When I arrived in Edmon-

ton, a flood was on in the North Saskatchewan River; the largest ever seen. I saw several shacks floating down the river from Ross Flats and I stood where the Macdonald Hotel is today and saw the North West steamer going down the river. It struck the pillars of the low level bridge and we saw the boilers rolling out of the boat. The pillars of the bridge had to be built higher. Later on I worked on these pillars. The land values dropped on the flats. I bought four lots for \$100.00 and after five years sold them for \$500.00 to a Mounted Policeman.

I was three weeks getting back home by wagon and boat. I started blacksmithing and as times were good, I made fair money, mostly by shoeing horses. At this time the Klondykers came back and started to build the village of what is now known as Grouard, of which I had the honor of being mayor for many years.

The town of Grouard was named after the Catholic Bishop Grouard, who was born in France. It is said he came north with Father Lacombe as a young priest. He spent his early priesthood on the McKenzie river establishing new missions. This was about 75 years ago. He was a very brave man. It was said that he froze his toes while on a trip to his parishioners and as gangrene set in, he cut off his own toes. He was in the Yukon long before there was any Dawson City. He built the mission at Grouard as we see it today. Many years ago he celebrated his fifty years anniversary at priesthood. Many Bishops and priests came from all over Canada to his celebration. He was also a great Cree speaker. I remember listening to his midnight service and I still recollect part of it today. He learned his Cree from the natives, not from books. He also

spoke several north Indian languages. He was a great painter. I have seen him paint the Crucifix which is in front of the altar in the church. At his celebration the settlers presented him with a new Star car and in thanking them he said in a joking manner: "I am an old man and I believe you want to get rid of me; that is why you give me this machine."

When they built the new church, Rev. Fr. Falher and Fr. Deruerey asked me to help paint it without any pay. I replied that I didn't belong to the Catholic church. Rev. Father Falher then asked me if I went to the English church, and I said, I did sometimes. Then he asked me if they served dinner there, and again I said, they did sometimes. Rev. Father Falher said: "You would take in a good beef steak better than you would a good sermon."

There was also a Rev. Sister Duche, who some years ago celebrated her fifty years of mission work. She is still there and I hope she will be spared for many years to come. She was born in France and spoke both English and Cree. There are several great-grandfathers here whom she taught when they were boys.

The town grew until there were twenty-two stores and businesses of all kinds, also a police centre, a newspaper office and three churches. The town's population was 3,000 and Wm. Milby acted as the town clerk for many years.

Owing to the fact that the railway and the Alaska highway missed the town, most of the white people moved away, leaving only several halfbreeds and Indians. The young halfbreed men and women living there now, speak English. They go to church on Sundays, but still have their Indian dances. The missionaries call them heathen

dances. They have some good points too. If one family is hungry, the rest will share their food with them; so none really go hungry. They will buy drinks and spend their money foolishly. During the prohibition time they learned from the white man how to make brew and even now they make brew from bran, shorts and sugar which the police call "Moose Milk."

They live their own ways, always happy; some work on farms and some in timber woods. They are good woodmen and good hunters. I remember an old man by the name of Lamouche, who used to belong to the Anglican church, but if the minister did not give him enough food and clothing for nothing, he would then go to the Catholic church and if he did not receive enough there, he would return to the Anglican. There was also a man named Martineau, who was a Brother in the Catholic church, but he fell in love with an Indian girl and married her. Of course the priest had to expel him from the church. He then put an altar in his teepee and held services there every Sunday, claiming his church to be half Anglican and half Catholic. I sold this man some food on credit but he was very honest and paid me for it.

There are many halfbreeds here who came from Norway House, Red River and Winnipeg. They ran away during the North West Rebellion as they would not fight with the Indians and did not want to fight against the white man. They settled here along the lakes and in the forests marrying native women. Most of their settlements were in Big Prairie, Salt Prairie and along the Peace River flats. They farmed, hunted, hauled freight and raised big families.

When I first came into this country and

landed in Calgary in the Klondyke days of 1897 and 1898, this place was only a small cattle town, but now it is a modern city with a population of over 100,000. For two hundred miles there are villages and towns everywhere about every ten or twenty miles apart. Edmonton was also then a small place of 1,500 or so people, but today it is the Capital of Alberta and a modern city of about 130,000 population. About 100 miles north on the Klondyke trail is the town of Athabasca with banks, hotels, many stores and a hospital. The Alaska Highway runs through the town. It is also the end of steel and is a good farming district besides lumbering and fur trading.

About 120 miles north of Athabasca is Slave Lake on the Northern Alberta Railway and also on the Alaska Highway. At this place in the early part of the century the North West built a telegraph line to open up the Peace River country. The early settlers were returned Klondykers. Walter Thompson, Tom Lilan and Charlie Schurter were among the first telegraph operators, while Charlie Pickfor and Jimmie Norris, an old freighter and now about 80 years old, were the linemen. Some time ago the town was called Sawbridge and was flooded out. It is now the railway station called Slave Lake. North of Slave Lake is Wabasca, a Hudson's Bay Trading Post with two missions and boarding schools, the Roman Catholic and Anglican. These are for the convenience of the Indians. Around Slave Lake there is fishing, lumbering and mink farming. During the war years the mink farmers made barrels of money. The office of the Government Forest Reservation is located here with a game warden and fish inspectors. J. L. Jensen is the

head of the Forestry Branch. He is a veteran of World War I and is a highly respected man.

A few miles out from Slave Lake there is an island in the lake called Dog Island. About 200 years ago the first Hudson's Bay Post was built on this island. Many years ago an Indian named Pierre fished for the Hudson's Bay Co. to feed the dogs. This is how the island got its name. I have seen this Indian catch a trout that when it was held up as high as his shoulder, the tail touched the ground. In later years there were no trout caught in this lake.

For many years J. K. Cornwall leased this island and established a fish smoking and drying plant there. He had working for him Charlie Hutton and Captain Nicholas, whom he brought from Germany. The plant was not a success and only lasted a short time.

All along the highway there are farmers, fishermen and lumbermen. At Canyon Creek the government has established an up-to-date fish hatchery with Mr. Tait as superintendent. He is a veteran of World War I and comes from Manitoba.

When I was a boy, there were a few Indian cabins there and we were forced to camp in one of them for two nights and two days owing to heavy storms and shortage of food. The Indian Chief was named Wabstenias and his brother was called Canvas Nose. (His nose having been lost when he attacked a grizzly bear in his hole with an axe). These men went out in a dugout canoe and got ten big whitefish for food. The waves were about ten feet high on the lake, but these Indians were good canoe men.

Coming further west we came to another small Indian settlement called Swan River Valley.

This place is now called Kinuso. The first settler in this district was J. C. Hunt, who came from North Dakota. He had with him fine horses, but they died because of the grass. He then bought some Indian ponies and started a large farm. About the same time three Americans, Mr. Cup, Mr. Grono and Mr. Hill, arrived and took up land. They farmed in the beautiful Swan Valley where almost anything that is planted will grow. Kinuso is the Cree word for fish.

The Indian Chief of that point was also named Kinuso. He was a noble Indian and a good friend of the white man. He passed away in 1918 during the flu epidemic with dozens of his band. The bodies of the chief, his wife and five men lay around the floor in his house in their blankets. A young Indian man whom the chief had raised, came into the house with a pack on his back and on seeing the bodies, dropped dead.

I remember during one treaty time the Indians complained about the white men settling in their country, and building roads and telegraph lines through their reserves. The chief in his speech said that the white men were as plentiful as mosquitoes and they did not want to live among them, work for them, or make friends with them. Kinuso is a nice, small town. H. W. Walker was the first storekeeper there; now he is operating a large general store. Windsor Rice also had a store. There is the Whitecotton's Hotel, a United church, a Catholic church and a fine school.

Eight miles further west is Faust, a saw-mill town with big fishing plants, mink and fox farming. One of the early settlers was Mr. Lee, a big fur farmer, who won several prizes for high quality furs. W. R. Menzie also came in as



a fisherman and fish buyer. Later he developed the Menzie Fish Company, handling many thousand pounds of fish all over Northern Canada. It is said that he is now a millionaire.

Mr. Bannister, an ex-government fish inspector, is also an early settler. He was born in Manchester and is an honest and respected citizen. Mr. Pruden is a storekeeper; Mr. Wiglock, a hotel proprietor, and Mr. McRae is the head of McRae Lumber Co., a large lumber mill.

Several miles west of the lake there is an Indian reservation with a sub-chief by the name of Mustus. He was very religious and used to come to Slave Lake dressed in a black suit and wore a big brass cross as a Catholic priest. Here also was old Sam Cuunningham, an ex-member of Parliament in the North West Territories. He was a halfbreed and was a member for St. Albert and Edmonton districts. His second wife was Chief Mustus' sister.

About ten miles further west was a narrow strip on the west end of Slave Lake called Willow Point. The returned Klondykers built about twenty-five cabins and there were also the Breden and Cornwall stores and trading posts. The water in the lake rose about ten feet and flooded all the flats, driving the people from their homes. In Cornwall's store they had planks to walk from one counter to another. A trader from Winnipeg by the name of Mr. McDermott, who celebrated a bit too much, fell off the planks and sat on the floor in water up to his neck. The Anglican minister, Rev. Holmes, came along and asked McDermott what he was doing there, and he replied: "Miles O'Connor McDermott, drunk, but a gentleman still."

Everybody moved away on account of the

flood. Breden and Cornwall built a new post on higher ground known as Stony Point, about one mile this side of the Hudson's Bay Co. The first white settlers there were Frank Mearon, McDermott, Joe Mearon, Oliver and Sid Travers, Jack Ryan, McNelly and several others. In the year 1908 a boom started and settlers began to pour in. Grouard, being the head of navigation, grew into a thriving town.

In 1915-16 the railway was built, side-tracking Grouard by ten miles. In World War I, I saw forty volunteers enlist. The Minister of the Interior, Frank Oliver, stopped the railroad for some time, but it went on again and Grouard ceased to be a town of any importance. I lived there about forty-five years, working at blacksmithing and running a department store; I also owned a steamship called "Slave River."

In about 1903 there were some nice native girls around and the parents of one of them said I should get married. The Anglican minister told me the same, as I had a house, a blacksmith shop, several horses and some money. I did not drink or play poker. One halfbreed girl of my own age wanted me to marry her. There was not a white girl within 300 miles of there, so I asked Father Falher what I should do. He said: "You both belong to the English church and rather than see you marry her, I will give you a rope," and he pointed to a big tree. He told me to go and hang myself and then I would be done. He said if I married this girl I would have to provide for all her relatives and half of the Heart River Indian settlement for the rest of my life and this would always keep me poor. This was the native custom at that time. For an example he called in a big, strong Indian from Stinking Lake, called

Caunacsoo and asked him where he lived and what he did. Caunacsoo said he lived with his white son-in-law and didn't do anything as his son-in-law fed him and looked after him.

I then advertised in a Minneapolis-Swedish newspaper for a wife and received about two hundred replies. Some were written in English and some in Swedish. Some of them were very fine writers. I corresponded with one from Dawrest, Minnesota, but she was in bed with typhoid fever when I went to meet her and died not long after that. Her parents farmed on Sand Hill and were very poor. I helped them with her funeral expenses and then looked up another girl in Minnesota. Before seeing her, I talked to the town policeman and he told me she wasn't any good. Then I went to North Dakota. I stopped in the small town of Ruthland. The lady proprietor of the hotel found out what my business was. As I walked down the street the girls would look at me and talk among themselves. Anyway I found a girl and was married in Fordham, N. D. We left for Edmonton which was still the North West Territory, where we raised four children. My wife died in 1919 with the flu.

Twelve miles east of Grouard is St. Bruno's Mission which was built by order of Bishop Grouard and Rev. Fr. Giroux. The great building is a children's home with a hundred or more children always there. There is a house for the Rev. Father and a big church. The writer was in this church when Father Giroux celebrated his 50th year of priesthood. The church was overflowing with people. The Rev. Bishop Langlois, his assistant Bishop and also many other priests and Rev. Sisters were there. Rev. Father Flock preached in Cree and another Father in

French. Rev. Father Gould, now of High Prairie, and a great English speaking missionary, was also present. Father Giroux lived here over 50 years and is highly respected, not only by his people, but by those of other faiths. He is truly one of the great apostles of the north.

Joe Hearon tells me that when McDermott came from Ireland he rented a shack from Johnny Boxer and the snowdrifts came well up to the roof of the shack that winter. They used to put whole rails down the chimney into the fireplace and let them burn that way. They were not axemen and used this method of burning the wood without having to cut it up.

Sidney Smith, Jim Cornwall's trader, went with an Indian dogteam into the Swan Hills and bought over five hundred martens from the Mustos band of Indians. He paid from \$2.00 to \$2.50 for each. For many years that same country hasn't had a single marten.

In 1905 I was in Edmonton when many Americans, Eastern Canadians and old country people were starting to settle by the thousands. There were also many Russians, Ukrainians, Poles, etc. These people were called Galicians at that time. Many were dressed in sheepskin and fur coats. In 1906 this part of the North West Territories was made into the Province of Alberta. The Edmonton Bulletin started up at this time. About 90% of the population was American. When the first election was held, a great runner by the name of Sexsmith, came on foot and brought the necessary proclamations with him. Nominations were held at the eastern end of the lake. The Conservative candidate did not know where it was held and Jim Bell went down on horseback. Mr. Breden was elected by acclamation. Being

the first member for Grouard constituency, Mr. Breden pledged to build a bridge across the lake at Willow Point, which he did, also a wagon trail across the Swan Hills to Edmonton.

The settlers cut a road along the Athabasca river, along the south shore of Slave Lake to Grouard. At that time we received mail once a month, carried in wagons by Bill Harkness. He received a small pay from the Hudson's Bay Co. and the traders. After two years Harkness quit and the settlers gave him a banquet and a purse of money. He was so surprised that he could not say a word. He later settled in Wabasca and lived there for many years.

After four years there was another election. Breden, Cote, Count Von Hammerstein and myself ran as candidates. The fight was between Breden and Cote, but the latter running on the Liberal slate, won the election. Mr. Cote was a surveyor. He lived in Dawson City and while there, two Swedes offered him a small claim if he would settle their mining dispute. Cote said he later sold that little claim for \$30,000.00.

Mr. Cote represented the district for many years. He was provincial secretary and finally he was appointed a Senator but did not live long to enjoy this appointment.

On another occasion I made a trip to Athabasca and with two captains we built a stern wheeler eighty feet over all. After the boat was completed we had trouble in getting a license, but finally I received a pemrit to carry freight in a private boat but could not charge passengers fares. On one trip going down to Athabasca Landing we had thirty-five passengers; a boatman went around with a hat and collected \$300.00. The Mounted Police met the boat and asked some

of the passengers if they paid any fare; they answered that they did not. Alex Williamson, who now runs a trading post at Sturgeon Lake, was the Sea Captain of the boat.

When Grouard was incorporated as a town, I ran for mayor against Mr. Larvier. I was defeated and Mr. Larvier became the first mayor. During the election one of the speakers, Jim Bell, said that I had built a big store and was getting rich by charging too much for my goods. He said I did not know anything — not even enough to take a good drink of whisky.

Stationed at Grouard with the Mounted Police was a remarkable sergeant by the name of Anderson, who was sent in to stop the whisky peddling. Anderson was of Icelandic parentage, born in Manitoba; later on he was inspector. He cleared up one of the first murder cases in the district which was committed at Sucker Creek. Two men camped at Sucker Creek one night and in the morning one man pulled out while the other one was missing. King, the murderer, told the police his partner Hays had gone to Sturgeon Lake and later said he went to Peace River. The sergeant sent out Indian trackers but they could not find Hays. He then drained a slough where he found Hays' boots and some clothing. He also noticed a lot of ashes after a big campfire and found some remains of bones. Many Indians were called as witnesses and this was the first time any of them had been on a train or seen brick buildings. An amusing thing happened at this trial. Mr. Hays' sister, who lived in England, had a dream. She saw her brother shot while he was sleeping, his money taken away and the body burned in a wood fire. King was found guilty and hanged at Fort Saskatchewan jail.

There was also a murder committed at Pouce Coupe, many miles from here. A man by the name of Mr. Coleman was found dead in a cabin. One young man admitted that he shot the cranky old bachelor in self defence. Being so far away from civilization and unable to bring the body all the way to Grouard, Sergeant Anderson simply removed the man's head and brought this back with him as evidence. The young man was convicted but received a very light sentence.

Mr. Breden told me he had two scows loaded with supplies coming from Athabasca. As they approached Shaw's Point, Sergeant Anderson was seen coming with his canoe. Breden ordered one scow to land and unload as quickly as possible. The other scow proceeded on to Grouard. The sergeant, thinking the unloaded scow had liquor on it, made a search but found nothing. In the meantime the other scow, loaded with many gallons of liquor, proceeded to Grouard. He also said there were two missionary ladies on his boat who had smelt the liquor and asked what it was. Breden told them there were apples in the bottom of the boat and they smelt them.

Inspector Anderson, however, will go down in history as one of the great men in the North West Mounted Police.

On the police force at that time was a constable by the name of William Capsey. He had served in India and in the South African War and had many decorations for his war services. Const. Capsey was a man who did not talk about himself. One day, after a drink or two of whisky, this is what he told me:

"I sneaked out of the tent late one night looking for girls during the South African War.

Down in the valley I discovered the enemy were out placing machine guns after the scouts had reported in the evening that the road was clear. I broke the army rules, but saved two thousand British lives." In later years Capsey retired on a farm in High Prairie.

Another noted policeman was Clam Warren, who accompanied Dr. West with two dog teams to Sturgeon Lake. While crossing the Snipe Lake on their way back, Dr. West got off and walked. Warren was driving the lead team. He travelled fast and the second dog team followed, so the doctor had to walk about four miles through deep snow. Finally Warren stopped and when the doctor caught up to him he said: "I thought you were in the carryall all the time, and I am very sorry." Warren was full of tricks like that. He was stationed at Sturgeon Lake and according to the Indian custom, many visited him at meal time. His food was getting low and then one of his trained dogs died. So when the Indians came and saw him boiling a big pot of meat on the stove, he told them it was dog meat. After that his star boarders never came back.

Two other constables, by the names of Joyce and Reddick, played a trick on the O. C. one day. Just before stable inspection they threw the harness down on the floor. The Sergeant was on the mat over this. Joyce afterwards rose to the rank of Inspector and Reddick quit the force and became a conductor on the passenger trains.

Dr. West was the first Inspector of Police at Grouard. He was followed by Inspector Constantine. The Mounties were highly respected by the old-timers, as many times they would bring two quarreling parties together; settle their disputes without lawyers or court of any kind and



everybody was satisfied. Great credit goes to the North West Mounted Police in building this great Peace River country.

Before being appointed as Inspector there, Constantine was chief of police at Winnipeg. He was succeeded by Inspector Howard and then came Inspector Fields, and he was followed by Sergeant Anderson, who was promoted to Inspector. Prior to the establishment of the headquarters at Grouard, Athabasca Landing was the headquarters. Black Jack McDonell was in charge. He was later promoted to Supt. A. E. C. McDonell and retired under pension with that rank.

Another old-timer on the force was H. H. Reynolds, who served under Supt. McDonnell. He afterwards retired on a farm near Enilda and for many years was Justice of the Peace.

Many settlers came into Grouard in those times and the Dominion government opened up a land agent's office there. Peter Tompkins was the first agent. He was appointed by Frank Oliver on a request from the halfbreeds who wanted some one able to speak the Cree language. Tompkins had gone through the Reil Rebellion. He was taken prisoner at Batoche and it was said that one of Poundmaker's wives saved his life and he afterwards married her.

Frank Oliver was a Member of Parliament for many years and afterwards became Minister of the Interior. Before Alberta was made into a province, I was asked to vote for Frank Oliver and I did. He was one of the greatest statesmen that western Canada ever produced.

The Hudson's Bay Co. had their headquarters in Grouard from where they supervised many posts scattered for hundreds of miles over the

country. Some of the first factors fifty years ago were: Dr. McKee, Messrs. Breton, Levick, Bedson, Harvey, Max Hamilton, C. A. Walker and Gredye. The Hudson's Bay Co. had a name for being honest in business and fair in dealing with the Indians and whites. Some of the independent traders of the district at that time were Jim Cornwall, Bredon, Desjarlais, Beauchamp, Clema and Edmo Paul. The writer also started a trading post at the beginning of the century, and traded for many years.

Jim Cornwall, also called "Peace River Jim," was born in Ontario. When he moved to the United States, he became a member of the Cox's army that marched to Washington and demanded better living conditions. He enlisted in World War I, and was made a colonel.

The government at Ottawa sent out a professor to the Peace River country to look into the possibility of opening it up. This man, Prof. McCoon, arrived during one of the wet years and said that grass and hay would grow there, but the country was not suitable for agriculture. However in the early nineties grain was sent from Dunvegan to Chicago where it was awarded first prize.

The Anglican and Roman Catholic Missions have farmed and fed hundreds of children in their boarding schools. The late Bishop Holmes built an Anglican Mission across the bay, that was also a boarding school for children. It was built about seventy years ago, but was closed in 1930 and has never been opened since. The staff and children were moved to Atikameg, better known as White Fish Lake.

The Catholic Mission in Grouard has a fine church, a convent, a Father's house and a large

brick school, said to be the only fire proof building in the Peace River country. My observations are that the native population are better off today than they were fifty years ago. They are better educated; some speak both English and French. They are well fed and clothed. Work is also plentiful. Some of the Indians have, however, adopted the bad habits of both the Indian and the white man.

Old Lamouche told me that about a hundred years ago there was a famine in the Peace River country and the Hudson's Bay Co. sent him to move the families to Slave Lake where they fed them white fish. He used oxen to haul the weak and the young, while the stronger ones walked. In Bishop Bompas book it is stated that one can live for months and even years on straight fish. Another old halfbreed said that 85 years ago there was a great flood and the plains around Slave Lake were all under water. In the last 50 years there has been high water twice covering the hay meadows around Grouard.

During World War 1 several families settled north of Grouard and opened up the Salt Prairie settlement. This name comes from the big salt springs which overflow and leave white coatings of alkali and salt at the edges of which the moose and deer come a long way to lick. The farmers do not have to buy salt for their stock. The first settlers of the district were the Moore and Walker families, who came from Wisconsin. They were great woodsmen, builders and farmers. Fifty miles north of Salt Prairie the government has surveyed great portions of prairie land and has settled them with the Metis or halfbreeds. They seem to get along fine with government supervision and, no doubt before long, will be self

supporting. There are hundreds of miles of farm land which could support millions of people.

In 1915-16 the Northern Alberta Railway was built. Thousands of settlers came in. The road was built mostly with wheelbarrows and Ukrainian labor. These people have now settled in fine homes.

After the railroad side-tracked Grouard by ten miles, the town began to die out. Buildings were sold, men went away and the Hudson's Bay Company closed down and nearly all the white people left. The Catholic Mission remained and today under Father Fogard a co-operative store and moccasin factory are operating. Halfbreeds are employed and this factory and store are now doing a thriving business.

Four or five miles south of Grouard is the Big Meadow settlement. One of the old-timers is Harry Reynolds. He was born in England and came here as a Mountie; served in World War I; was wounded and returned to the farm.

A Swedish settlement has been established at Big Meadow. Fifteen miles south is High Prairie, a coming town with a population of 700. The writer was elected first mayor of the village. This village has many stores, three doctors, elevators, a big hospital, several hotels, Anglican, United, Ukrainian, Nazarine and Catholic churches, also Jehovah Witnesses church. They have an Elks' lodge, Ladies' Royal Purple lodge, the Masonic lodge and other organizations. There is a sawmill and an American pulp company which is cutting burned spruce timber and shipping it by trucks to Wisconsin where it is used in making nylon stockings.

I remember many years ago when the Ed-

monton Bulletin stated that the great timber area south of High Prairie could not burn, but this has not been the case as thousands of acres of the finest timber in Northern Alberta have been destroyed by fire.

The first white settlers at High Prairie when it was part of the North West Territories were Frank Mearon, Ghostkeeper, Jake Emerson, Ferguson, Fewang Olson, Pete Run, Sid Savill, O. D. Hill, Dan Hayden and others.

Frank Mearon passed away recently and the Grande Prairie Herald had this to say about him. He was born on October 20th, 1860 at Aylmer, Quebec, being the fifth of a family of fifteen. His father was a French Canadian and his mother, who crossed the Atlantic at the age of ten in a sailing boat, was English. His father was a blacksmith at Aylmer for 30 years and Frank was one of the eight sons who learned the trade. He also learned how to make wooden soled shoes, an accomplishment which he found very useful in later years.

In referring to his boyhood years the Herald states that he had to saw firewood for two hours each day after school. To this vigorous exercise he attributed much of his strength and vigor. At the age of seventeen he left home for a logging camp up the Ottawa River. He related that in camp he and the time-keeper were the only ones who could read and write. It fell to him to write love letters for the loggers and to read their replies. For this service they would pay him with tobacco. He also used to read aloud at the camp. He long remembered the breathless interest or excited French ejaculations as the stories of Jesse James unrolled.

After nine years of logging he came west in 1887 with Chas. Magrath. He worked for Magrath about two years, surveying Eastern Alberta around Beaver Ridge area. He then entered the employment of the Hudson's Bay Co., building tramways on Lake Athabasca. He also helped to build the first steamer on the Athabasca River. This boat was in use for many years but is now replaced by another of the same name "Athabasca River." While in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company, he was as far north as the Great Slave Lake. His work consisted of repairing York boats.

Then followed a short period of farming near Edmonton in the Horsehill district. Besides farming he freighted from Edmonton to Calgary before the C. & E. line was built. Then he moved to Grouard at the time of the Klondyke rush and freighted for the Klondykers and also the Hudson's Bay Co. from Grouard over the Peace River road. He was also a blacksmith at Grouard. In 1904 he was joined by his nephew Sydney Brown. In the spring of 1904 these two men moved to what is now High Prairie, where they remained until 1925. These two pioneers turned the first sod in High Prairie. They farmed in the summer and in the winter ran a steam-powered sawmill located a quarter of a mile east of where the Providence Hospital now stands. The late Frank Mearon also carried on a blacksmithing business and was a member of the first High Prairie school board (then called Prairie River S. D.) along with Mr. McCue and Soren Feway. Their first teacher was Geo. Martin. Mr. Smeaton was also somewhat of a horse doctor and specialized in treating horses' feet. In High Prairie he owned

a fox farm with silver, red and cross foxes and made an outstanding success of this business.

About 1905 he married Caroline Andrews of High Prairie, by whom he had one daughter, Helen, now wife of O. C. Benson of Vancouver, a boat builder. Mr. Mearon's wife died with the flu in 1918 and in 1925 he sold his fox farm and moved to live with his daughter at Vancouver. He returned to Alberta in 1936 and made his home with Sydney Brown, who had by then located on the Little Smokey, 16 miles from High Prairie. While on Mr. Brown's farm, he engaged in gardening at which he was most successful as late as 1946. He raised 32 sacks of potatoes, besides all kinds of other vegetables. He also raised and cured his own pipe tobacco. He was planning to introduce better methods of gardening in Valley View in the spring of 1947. He was a great reader and took a deep interest in present day affairs. He had the Bible at his finger tips. His lettery aversion were the funny papers. He could repair clocks and a day or so before he was stricken, he reconditioned a clock for the Calais school without the aid of glasses. On Christmas Day he took to his bed and his daughter was summoned to his side but he never rallied. He lingered until February 11th, when he passed peacefully away in his sleep.

Sid Savell came here in 1904. He was born in London, England, and proved himself to be a great farmer. He raised a large family and is now retired. Sid tells me that while he was going to Slave Lake he had to cross a river. The water being high with spring waters, his horses had to swim and his wagon box floated away, so he pulled off his coat and jumped into the river to

secure his wagon box. Then he met Harry Chritchley, who informed him that he had forgotten half a bottle of whisky on the other side and if he could get it, he could have it. He then proceeded to Slave Lake and got married the same day.

William Lesage came here from Idaho, and now has a fine farm. Dan Hayden came from the Maritime Provinces. He is a veteran of the Boer War and World War I. He was also a big farmer but is now retired.

During the periodical river floods one of the wooden bridges went out of the Prairie River and several years after another bridge was reported being washed out. The government bridge builder, Mr. Content, arrived to inspect it and the writer drove him out with his team and buggy. On getting close to the river Mr. Content stood up in the buggy and said: "Gee whiz; my bridge is there, but the country is gone." The flood had washed a channel on each side of the bridge. The settlers of High Prairie built roads, constructed bridges, schools, churches and cultivated fine farms. This is now the finest part of the eastern Peace River district.

An old Indian told me that when he was a boy the High Prairie district was full of beaver and he killed a lot of them in the various channels which are now dry ravines. Another old-timer is Sam Harris, who came here and took up a homestead on which he worked hard. In the winter time he hauled freight from Edmonton to Grande Prairie and Saskatoon Lake. At that time there weren't any houses along the road. He had to cook his own meals and sleep under the trees. The trip was over one thousand miles.



He is now a very prominent Free Mason and a few years ago was Grand Master of Alberta and is still in business at High Prairie. He was another English boy that came over here and made good.

There is also Charlie Walker, who was born in India and came to Wasbaca as a boy and acted as bookkeeper for the Hudson's Bay Co. He was also Chief Factor for the Hudson's Bay Co. in Grouard for many years. He served as an officer in World War I and later owned a general store in High Prairie. Mr. Walker also served as an officer in World War II. He is now retired and is a prominent Mason.

Another old-timer is Harry Becker, who arrived here 40 years ago. He is a tailor by trade, born in Woodstock, Ontario. He took up a homestead and is a successful farmer. He also is a Mason and is honored and respected by all.

\* \* \* \* \*

McLennan is the divisional point of the railway; one railway going to Peace River and the other through Grande Prairie to Dawson Creek. The town itself is beautiful and has a population of about 800, and is a fine residential district.

The writer wishes to pay the highest compliment to the railway men; as he has not heard of a single rail accident in over 30 years.

The writer and an old-timer, Hughie Hunter, drove the first motor car to McLennan through the forest and over the Stinking Lake. Hughie informed me that he had been sent by the railway company to sample the water of Round Lake which is at McLennan. In going over the forest trails the water was spilled, so when he got on board the steamboat at Slave Lake, he filled the

container with Slave Lake water which was analyzed as being the very best. Afterwards the railway company had to replace many boiler tubes because of the bad water in Round Lake. So for many years they have been hauling water from great distances or have been catching rain water for use in their locomotives. E J

The first permanent settler in McLennan was Mr. Giroux, who was born in Quebec but who had lived for many years in the United States before coming to Canada. He built the first hotel and store in McLennan and with him was Hughie Hunter, who later became the Justice of the Peace. In the early days Hunter was also superintendent of the Highways and Roads and was a strong Liberal politician. When he passed away at his home in McLennan, he was buried by the Elks' Lodge.

Near McLennan is what the natives call Stinking Lake. It is about twelve miles long and it is believed that the lake was formed by a volcanic eruption, as the Indians say: "Trees are standing up in the bottom of the lake." McLennan business men placed fish in the lake and these multiplied for several years but have finally all disappeared and no one seems to know just where or how. The lake has no outlet and at certain times is very odorous.

The writer remembers the time when they were building the railway through to Peace River. Coming back from Peace River, the freight cars and water tank were derailed and everyone had to help to get them back on the track. All the passengers were very hungry and the commercial travellers were eating their candy and biscuit samples.

While getting off the train at McLennan I helped a lady with her baggage. When I went into the hotel dining room the man at the next table said: "Did you see the Mayor of Grouard carrying the suitcases for Jew Bess?" Everyone laughed. Little did I know that she was the notorious dancing girl of the Peace River country.

The population of the surrounding district consists mostly of farmers, both grain and fur; and there are also several sawmills.

McLennan also has a new Roman Catholic Cathedral which is said to be the finest building between Winnipeg and the Rocky Mountains, and is said to have cost \$350,000.00. The building is fireproof, but is as yet unfinished inside. Louis Baneireau says that inside the Cathedral are four or more life-sized statutes of the Apostles, three altars and many religious scenes sculptured out of the solid stone wall. There is also the Bishop's Palace where the Rt. Rev. Bishop Langlois and his assistant Bishop (who was born in Alberta) live. The town also has an Anglican church and a United church. There is a hotel, a large bakery and several stores.

One of the first settlers was Louis Baneireau who was born in Quebec and who went to New Hampshire with his parents while still an infant. Louis came to Grouard in 1912 and ran a barber shop there, and took up the first homestead at McLennan. He also holds the honour of being the first silver fox farmer in the Peace River district. He is now retired and living in the town of McLennan.

Another old timer was Tom Chisholm. Louis Baneireau says that he lent Chisholm a team of oxen and gave him chickens to look after when

he first settled in the Peace River country. Chisholm used to cut a load of wood every day, a remarkable feat for a man then past eighty years of age. He used to sell a load for \$10.00; and Louis says that these loads were nearly as large as a load of hay.

Previous to this Old Tom Chisholm owned several saloons and a hotel in Dawson City, and it is said that he was the first millionaire in the Yukon. He gave several thousand dollars to build a new hospital in Dawson City. Just recently this hospital invited him to spend his last days there but he refused. He also contracted on the railroad.

Old Tom was a Frontier man. He made a lot of money and lost it, and he chose to be laid to rest in the Catholic Cemetery in McLennan.

Another old timer was Mr. Rich who was the first post-master and restaurant keeper in McLennan.

Still another old timer was Mr. Laverier, who was head of the Government Land Offices in Grouard for some time. He moved here in the very early days and was storekeeper, Mayor of the town of Grouard and Justice of the Peace.

Some of the other oldtimers are Mr. Charbonneau who runs an automobile showroom and garage. Mr. McCaulley helped to build the railway through to Peace River and declares that they had scratching poles all along the line. This must be a carry over of an old Irish custom.

Another of the old settlers is Hank Hayterderque who came North from Michigan in 1910 to cut wood for the Hudson's Bay Company. He later worked for George McLeod building the first telegraph line to Peace River. Hank trapped at Hudson's Hope, ran a saw for A. George of Peace

River and several other things, finally going to work for the E. D. B. C. railway as a line man, where he worked for seventeen years. He is now retired, in his own words "I quit by request."

Donnelley, eight miles west, is a small village nicely built. This part of the Peace River country is about thirty miles square; and the population is nearly all French Canadians many of which migrated from the United States.

The main oldtimer in Donnelley is a store-keeper, one Dan Durant. His daughter won a scholarship just recently in an Eastern university.

There is also a large Catholic Church with a brick convent and dormitory attached. There is a Co-op store, several grain elevators, and the usual village buildings.

The oldest homesteaders and farmers are Messrs. Hausteters, Abair, Legio and Parquette. The latter has the most beautiful farm and the best buildings in the whole settlement.

Falher is another village four miles west of Donnelley and is a French Canadian town, having a fine big church, convent and schools. There are several business buildings built of brick and stone, two Banks and five grain elevators.

The manager of the Co-operative store is Paul Sicotte, an oldtimer who has done a hundred and twenty-seven thousand dollars worth of business in a year.

Another oldtimer is Demers, who is the manager of the Departmental store.

Falher got its name from the late Rev. Father Falher who was the best Cree speaker in the whole Peace River country.

This country at one time was heavy timber, but the great fire of 1902 and several later fires

have turned this land into prairie. In many places the top soil was burnt right down to clay. The progressive French Canadians learned in later years to raise clover, and it is said to be the best alfalfa growing district in the North. The alfalfa seeds are shipped to the United States and nearly all the farmers are becoming wealthy, each farmer having his own tractors, cars, and trucks.

Several miles west of here on the road to Watino and Spirit River is the village of Girouxville, which has been built in later years. Here is a thriving community with stores, hotel and elevators; etc. Surrounding the village is a fine farming district.

It's history repeating itself. Today a village, tomorrow a town, the next day a city.

Sixty miles north of McLennan is the town of Peace River. It is the old trading post of the Hudson's Bay Company and is built on the river flat. The banks of the river on the highway are about 800 feet high. With the event of the railway going through, it became the largest commercial town in that part of the country. They are now successfully drilling for natural gas, and in the near future they expect to be using it as the utility fuel of the district. Peace River is a fully modern town and is considered the most beautiful in the North country.

The people are very progressive and enterprising. Any project that they take into hand is completed within a short time such as the new Memorial Arena, one of the most imposing structures of the North.

The river itself is a thousand yards wide in high water, and has steamers plying their way up and down servicing the different trading posts.

Peace River is the head of the Anglican diocese, which takes in thousands of miles. The Bishop's Palace is a well known feature of the town. The Cathedral and the Athabasca Hall were built with the money given anonymously by some woman in England.

Here are the names of a few old Indian people some of which the writer knew as a boy and some of which he was told about by James McKenzie and Joe St. Germaine. Of these most have now passed away.

Pascalle, a woman .....	110 years of age
Mrs. White Bear (grey) .....	105 years of age
Lapotac, a woman .....	120 years of age
Mother Supperault .....	109 years of age
Mrs. Recerd .....	105 years of age
Mrs. Rowan .....	115 years of age
Mahapus, a man .....	110 years of age
Ockanume, a man .....	112 years of age
Hustafarfield, a man .....	103 years of age

## Early Peace River

The following speech is printed through the courtesy of Betty Claughton of Peace River, who was presented with a cup by the Chamber of Commerce for delivering it.

Sir Alexander MacKenzie left Fort Chipewyan and followed a river which is now called MacKenzie River, until he reached the Arctic Ocean. He heard of a river flowing west and he wanted to explore it. He hoped that he might reach the Pacific Ocean.

First he went home to Scotland, studied astronomy and in January, 1792, he sent word to Fort Chipewyan to have men go up the Peace

River to build a fort where they might spend the next winter.

On October 10th, 1792 MacKenzie left Fort Chipewyan to sail up the Peace River. On October 13th, 1792 he reached Peace Point where the Beaver Indians held peace parleys with their enemies the Crees from the south, from which the river gets its name. He came as far as the forks of the Peace and Smokey rivers in November, 1792, and spent the winter at Peace River — our first white man. In May, 1793 he left the forks for the Pacific Ocean.

In 1802 David Thomson surveyed the land and he has a trail marked between Grouard and Peace River called Vinistinaw. This trail was still here 30 years ago.

MacKenzie built a garden around his fort and six years later after the fort had been deserted men were sent down from Dunvegan to harvest the crop. Bishop Bompas, an Anglican missionary, was the first to do any real farming and this was done to supply his mission in 1878. The next year Mr. Lawrence started a mission farm at Fort Vermilion. He had a large family and a great many of them live around here now.

In 1882 Rev. Brick, who was an Anglican missionary at Dunvegan, brought in machinery and pure bred stock. In 1892 he sent wheat to the World's Fair at Chicago and it won 1st prize. The wheat was hauled to Grouard by team and from there to Edmonton by dog-team.

A son, Allie Brick, took up a farm near the mission farm at Brick's hill. He was the first farmer in the Peace River country to raise wheat on a commercial scale. He was also the first M.L.A. when the Province of Alberta was formed.



Dad Griffen was another early settler. Mrs. Eaton was the first woman to take up a homestead, situated next to Dad Griffen's farm.

The first road in the district was an oxcart road from Grouard to Peace River and was built by the Hudson's Bay Company and followed an old Indian war trail.

Rev. Brick made the first road to Dunvegan by hitching a plow to the back of his wagon. One side was made while he was driving there and the other when he was coming back.

In 1912 Mr. Ferguson drove the first car up here. It took ten days to make the trip from Edmonton. He came to the Lesser Slave Lake and ferried across to Grouard. He had to be pulled through the bush many times.

The first church here was the St. James Anglican which was built in 1910. Mr. and Mrs. Maceloro were the first couple married in the church and the last to take communion in it.

The first public school was opened on October 28th, 1912 in a log house with 19 pupils on the register. The teacher was Miss Margaret Anderson, a young lady just over from Scotland. It took H. A. George two weeks to get her in from Edmonton. They came to Athabasca Landing by train and from there to Soto Landing on Lesser Slave River by wagon. They went up the Slave River and across the Slave Lake by steamboat and then on to the Peace River in a democrat. She was married in April, 1913.

Miss Jean Kelly was the next teacher and she promised not to get married before the term was up. She came in the first car to be brought in by its own power. The route being to Athabasca, up the Athabasca and Slave rivers and

across the Lesser Slave Lake on the ice, then from Grouard to Peace River.

The Peace Hotel was opened in 1914. The first hospital was the Irene Cottage Hospital. It was a very rough, crude building built in 1914. Miss Jean McEwen was the first nurse and she cooked and washed for the patients too. She worked for the first two months without pay. Carpenters made wooden beds and the ladies gave blankets, dishes, etc. Dances were held to raise money to buy equipment.

In March, 1915 the first car of wheat was shipped from the district. It was hauled by team to Reno which was the end of the steel. In 1914 Peace River Crossing was made into a village. George E. McLeod was the first reeve. In 1916 the Post Office Department changed the name of Peace River Crossing to Peace River and in 1919 it was incorporated as a town with Dr. Donald being the first mayor.

The big steel bridge was built across the Peace in 1917-18. They also built a fine large Roman Catholic church. The United church was the building used by a wholesale firm for a store.

H. A. George lives in Peace River's oldest building which was the first Hudson's Bay Company store. In the summer of 1913 Dave Halket bought the last 100 lbs. of flour from the store. By Christmas all that was left on the shelves were some tan shoes and straw hats; in putting up the shoes, they found a mouse nest in one of them. That spring there was a great scarcity of food. The homesteaders lived on rabbits for several months. Potato eyes had been shipped in from Eaton's but the potatoes froze that winter.

I enjoy the stories when my mother was a

little girl or when my father was a little boy; also the stories when Peace River was young interest me. Perhaps when Peace River has become a prosperous city with our oil wells being used and the rich minerals from the north pouring in, I might be able to tell this story to other children.

Several miles north of McLennan is the village of Reno which used to be called Little Prairie. The populace is largely Ukrainian farmers. During the old days one of the notorious characters was a man known as Baldy Red. He came from Manitoba where he had been a school master, to freight for the Grand Trunk line while they were laying the steel through to the Coast. Here he became well known as a successful bootlegger who usually managed to keep one jump ahead of the police. Later he came north to freight for the Northern Alberta Railways while they were laying the steel from McLennan to Peace River.

One incident in Baldy's much colored life occurred during prohibition when he was freighting from Reno to Peace River. Two Roman Catholic Sisters wished transportation from Reno to Peace River and Baldy offered them a ride, making very sure that they were seated with the greatest possible comfort on the trunk that contained the whiskey he wished to smuggle into Peace River. Just outside of Peace River town the police stopped his wagon and searched it, but being very much in awe of the Sisters, did not disturb them, so Baldy got the whiskey through and made a nice sum that night — thanks to the Sisters.

Another of Baldy's escapades was the time when he sold a cow to a lady in the Grande Prairie

district. It happened that Baldy owed a considerable bill for board and room to another party in Grande Prairie and they were pressing him for payment. During the night Baldy took the cow from the woman to whom he had sold it and resold it to the man to whom he owed this debt, thus settling the bill. Before morning he stole the cow from the man and returned it to the woman. He went through the same procedure on another occasion but the woman had him arrested and he was convicted of theft.

When they arrived in McLennan en route to the Fort, they met another prisoner who was under sentence for having stolen a watch. Baldy thinking he could get a raise out of the other asked: "What time is it?" to which the other replied: "Milking time, you son of a - - - ." This is one of the standing jokes of the country.

Just to show that Baldy was not altogether a scoundrel, there was the time when a homesteader's wife brought her mentally afflicted husband out to the postoffice from where Baldy was to take him to Edmonton to see a doctor. The woman asked him how much the fee would be expecting to be charged around \$100.00, to which Baldy replied: "When you get into the city, send me back a nice new necktie." This was in the days when no one wore a necktie either Sunday or Monday. It is said that in his later years Baldy taught Sunday school in Reno.

Between Reno and Peace River is the village of Nampa with the usual collection of stores and elevators. The surrounding country is mostly park land and is drained by the Harman River. The farmers are mostly Russians and Ukrainians.

Grimshaw is the next village of any size and

is an up and coming town. Some of the earliest settlers were John Godette, Tom Shelley, Carl Johnson and the Hallits. Grimshaw gets its name from old Dr. Grimshaw, who was a great doctor, well loved by everyone. When the doctor was laid to rest cars came from hundreds of miles around so that the people could pay their respect to a well loved man at his funeral.

The writer just met Carl Johnson, who has recently returned from a trip to Sweden and Denmark. Johnson was telling me that when these countries were under the German occupation, it was not safe for man or woman to go down the street well dressed as the Germans would take the clothes off them. He also told me that the people are now happy and have sufficient to eat and to wear.

Grimshaw is the terminal for the roads running to Hay River and to Great Slave Lake which is now under construction.

### An excerpt from "AWAKE"

If you are a lover of maps and have read the names of far-away places, wondering what their country and people are like, you may have noted a town called Aklavik. Follow the Arctic shore line of Alaska eastward across the Canadian border and dip a little inland on the delta of the great MacKenzie River. There lies Aklavik, 120 miles within the Arctic circle. Although this village of 350 whites, serving as educational and trade centre to as many more Eskimos, is not large compared with the Russian Arctic ports of Murmansk and Dudinka, it is probably the most northerly white settlement on the continental mainland. It has telegraph connections with the

rest of the world, and plane schedule during a portion of the year. If you arrive there in July, you would observe gardens being planted in the bright sunshine of two o'clock in the morning, and learn that eighteen inches of unfrozen soil produced the finest lettuce, turnips, peas, beets, kale, spinach and carrots during the sixty days before the "permafrost" (permanently frozen ground) seeps up from below for the long winter freeze. Around the clock the sun brings amazing results, also to the giant delphinium which alone endures the Arctic winter outside, then rivals the sky in spring bloom.

Interest in the Arctic has progressively centred in trapping, whaling, mining and military strategy. The Provisional District of Canada's Northwest Territories, known as MacKenzie in which Aklavik is situated, was developed at first by the fur explorers of the Hudson's Bay Company. These, together with the mining and religious missions, are still the entrenched interests of northern Canada. Following Hearne's exploration of the Coppermine river, within forty miles of the Coronation gulf of the Arctic, Alexander MacKenzie explored the great river which bears his name, as far north as a "lake" where white whales were playing. It was probably only after the observation of tides the next day that he realized he had penetrated to the sea (1789). Coal, sulphur, and petroleum like "yellow wax" were discovered; and 1,500 miles of waterway from the Arctic to the MacKenzie's source in Great Slave Lake, opened up for travel. Furs were eventually carried all the way to Montreal by interconnecting lakes and rivers. In fact, shallow draft boat was the reliable vehicle for travel

in this country. In 1821 Franklin explored a part of the Arctic shoreline in two birch bark canoes.

Still important industries in this MacKenzie district, and also eastward in the Yukon and Alaska, are trapping and fishing. Otter, beaver, ermine, mink and marten are trapped throughout the northwest, while one of the most amazing salmon runs in the world follows the broad waters of the Yukon river. The Alaskan salmon is among the greatest producers in the world, a 25-pound female laying about 25,000 eggs after a 1,500-mile journey from the Atlantic.

Other amazing animals in this fabulous region are the 60-ton whales which are hunted in the leads (narrow channels through floe ice), from Point Barrow eastward to the MacKenzie's mouth. Most often harpooned or shot with the bomb gun from the sturdy boat made of bearded seal, called the umiak, they are used solely for food. After a successful catch of three or more whales, Eskimos of Barrow hunt walruses and polar bears. The latter, sometimes called the "snow king," is a long-range swimmer, sometimes found many miles from any land, and has fur even on the soles of its feet.

Animal life is too prolific for description. On the Kodiak island is the famous Kodiak or brown bear which is, according to M. H. Mason, a thousand pounds of atomic energy. He claims that these bears, instead of being clumsy, are lean-muscled athletes, clearly observable when their fur clings to them after a swim. He estimates they can bound 35 feet in one leap and cover 100 yards in six seconds. The same authority describes the wapitu or elk, musk ox, caribou or American reindeer, the cunning timber wolf,

and the mighty forest monarch, the Alaskan moose, which stands seven feet at the shoulder and has an antler spread of six feet.

### **GOLD, SILVER, OIL AND RADIUM**

The second great impetus to development of the Northwest was the discovery of large quantities of gold in the Klondyke region on the Yukon about the turn of the century. While great quantities were located here, gold is found in small or large quantities in almost every creek in the Yukon or Alaska. Dawson became the centre of the north wilderness gold strike, famous in story for valor against the snow and against two-gun outlaws. Today another famous frontier town has mushroomed on the shores of Great Slave Lake after discovery of gold. Yellowknife, a booming but orderly town of more than 5,000, lies 700 miles north of any Canadian city and has a hotel, style shop, restaurants and plane service, but no plumbing. There were six producing gold mines in 1945.

Westward of Yellowknife, on Great Slave's outlet into the MacKenzie, is the most northerly oil refinery in the world, Norman Wells. (The United States has untapped oil reserves 300 miles north of the Arctic circle in Alaska, and Russia may now have a more northerly refinery, but Norman Wells apparently held the record in 1940). Precious gasoline is thus produced where it is really needed for planes, boats and vehicles. Farther up towards the Arctic circle, on Great Bear lake, large silver veins, assaying 2,000 ounces to the ton, are mined, while on this lake's eastern shore is Port Radium, where radium has been developed extensively since 1939 from pitch-



blende, in a company owned village. Generally, Canadian resources have scarcely been tapped in this great northern wilderness.

The location of so much heavy mineral, gold, copper, silver, platinum, nickel, radium and possibly uranium in the polar region, seems to support the truth that the metallic rings thrown around the earth during the creative state, after cooling, fell first at the point of least centrifugal resistance, the poles.

What has heretofore been said deals chiefly with the Arctic and subarctic region of western Canada and Alaska. In the Keewatin and Franklin districts to the east are found the Canadian island partners of Greenland extending almost to the north pole. These icy strongholds where the trees have disappeared and the polar bear is monarch, have scarcely been explored. The trip from Alaska to Greenland takes us more than a third around the northern world. With the exception of the quarter section of Arctic Ocean perimeter from Greenland to North Cape of Norway, the rest of the Arctic circle is contained within the boundaries of the U. S. S. R. Because of this geographic fact, and because of the modern development of long-range bombers and guided missiles (rockets, robots, etc.), the polar region has focused upon itself the concentrated interest of the army, navy and air force, both American and Russian. Russia charges that America has subordinated Canada in ringing the Arctic with a formidable "Maginot line" of thirty forts and bases. Why Russia does not like it clearly appears when it is seen that from Fairbanks, Alaska, for example, directly over the north pole and but 4,131 miles away lies Moscow; from Greenland bases

(which America already owns) to Russia's all year Arctic port of Murmansk, is about 2,100 miles; while from Iceland, where the U. S. based their ships, planes and men during the war, it is only 2,000 miles to Moscow. Again the Americans do not like it when Russia puts a gigantic base at Petropavlovsk on the north Pacific peninsula of Kamchatka, only 490 miles from the Aleutian island of Attu, and 4,910 miles from Detroit's factories.

That Russia is also building an opposing Siegfried Line along the frigid Arctic is disclosed by the development of giant industrial centres in Siberia, such as Yakusk and Magadan. Kravchenko, former Soviet official, claims that the most modern blast furnaces, glass works, oil refineries and rail and air ports are to be found in Siberia, mostly developed by prisoner of war labor. For protection the Russians are building underground factories and tunneling under the largest rivers to avoid bridge construction, and have inaugurated a regular Arctic Ocean route along her shores from Murmansk and Archangel in Europe to her Siberian ports of Dudinka, Petropavlovsk and Vladivostok, the Pacific terminal of the trans-Siberian railway. Dudinka, near the Arctic mouth of the Yenisei river, and a smaller version of the million population Magadan, and Norylsk producing nickel, copper, platinum, have their own power plants and metallurgical furnaces within the Arctic circle. The more southerly Yakutia province of a million and a half (the total population of Soviet East is estimated at 40,000,000) produces gold and is said to have about the same climate as Alaska, with winter temperatures of 70 below zero. Besides this in-

dustrial development some 450 Russian expeditions of the north will set up lighthouses, radio beacons and radar stations. The Russians are also busy on the Kuriles north of Japan and on the Komandorski islands 210 miles from Attu.

Thus world interest is being magnetically drawn to a circle that contains the coasts and islands bathed by the Arctic and topped by the polar icecap. It is a big circle that would contain the United States super-imposed upon its icy wastes. But the giant bombers of 10,000 miles cruising range, when based in this circle, could bomb 90% of the population of the world.

### The Sourdough

This splendid study of a Sourdough with his crop of whiskers and rough, careless attire, is typical of those hardy men who have responded to the lure of the north, ever hopeful that they will "strike it rich."

Long years of hardship and toil have racked his joints, and etched lines of character on his face. But he is obviously happy. Perhaps he is recalling those early days, hearing the laugh and chaff of his pals and the nasal tone of his gramophone; reliving the thrill of hope while panning the speckled sand, until at last — his first nugget. Remembering the rough journeys, fighting each step through ramparts of snow; shooting the wrath of rapids; the disappointments and successes, when he was a pionner and all life was a glorious adventure. Far from his mind are the worries and cares of the city. He is at home, basking in the sunshine, revelling in the close companionship of his dogs.

And so dear friends, in gentler valleys roaming,  
Perhaps, when on my printed page you look,  
Your fancies by the firelight may go homing  
To that lone land that haply you forsook,  
And if perchance you hear the silence calling,  
The frozen music of star-yearning heights,  
Or, dreaming, see the seines of silver trawling,  
Across the sky's abyss on vasty nights,  
You may recall that sweep of savage splendor,  
That land that measures each man at his worth.

Fifty miles along the new road is North Star and a short distance further on is Notikewin; both are small towns which are surrounded by farm lands. A few miles further north-east is Keg River which is really a large Hudson's Bay trading post; nearly all the populace are half-breeds.

Several hundred miles down the river from Peace River is Fort Vermilion. The country is pretty much park land and the settlers went in about 60 years ago. Among the first to go were the Lawrence Brothers sent in as Anglican missionaries to build a mission and christianize the Indians and to teach them how to farm. The land is very rich and the crops are bountiful.

A few miles west of Grimshaw is Berwyn which is somewhat larger than Grimshaw. It is a very nice town with several elevators, a fine hotel and brick business section. The settlers are mostly English speaking, with several Scandinavians and a few Russians.

A little further on is Brownvale. A nice little town. The first settlers came in 1909 and included Bert Iverson, William Roberts, Ole Strathmore, William Piper, Tom Gilcrest, Dave Wilson, Eric Linquist and Tom Rowe.

Dan Morgan told the writer the following about John Wilde, a Hungarian and a naturalized American, who came to Brownvale in 1905, buying land for \$5.00 an acre and some time later he sold it for \$45.00 an acre and returned to the United States. Not very long thereafter he came back and again settled in Brownvale. However, while crossing the border he made his children get out and kiss the Canadian soil.

One incident that will show the spirit of the people of Brownvale is the fact that they took up a collection for a young man who, while out hunting accidentally discharged the gun nearly severing the arm. In a few days the town had collected nearly \$200.00 for this unfortunate young fellow. This is truly the pioneer spirit of the North.

Whitelaw lies between Brownvale and Fairview. It is a very nice little town with several stores, churches and elevators and the regular business buildings. The Elks' Lodge is very strong in this town. The surrounding district is mostly farming country.

Fairview is the largest town between Peace River and Dawson Creek. The town itself was moved up from the Waterhole in 1928, and is now fully modern with brick buildings, churches, schools and business section. They also have a fully equipped fire apparatus purchased from the Royal Canadian Air Force. The town controls business for a very large farming area and here a crop failure has never been known.

The earliest settlers came in 1910-11-12 and took up land on the great plains. There were the McKenzie Bros., Rownees, French, John Casper, Chalmers, Campbell, Bennett, Dobsons, Dodges, Bartlett and others.

Oscar Johnstone came to Fairview in 1914. He was born in Sweden. He built the first electric light plant in Fairview and is now running one of the largest implement businesses in the Peace River country. The mayor of Fairview is a Swede and Jack Carrigan says he is "a hard headed Swede." The people of the community are all enterprising and their latest project is a very large building to be equipped as a "frozen locker" plant, large enough to serve the whole district.

Mr. Canada was born in Scotland and was the U. F. A. member from 1921 to 1935. Mr. Martin was born in England and worked on the telegraph line, while it was being put through the Peace River country. He was the representative member in the Provincial House from 1940 to 1944. These two men brought cultural wealth as well as material wealth to the Fairview district.

Bluesky is a small town with a large Co-op store, a fine hotel and several elevators. There is also a large Roman Catholic Mission here consisting of a cathedral, fire-proof convent and dormitory, run by the Sisters. The surrounding district is mostly given over to farming and the farmers themselves are largely of German-American descent.

Hines Creek is a small town which is the end of steel and is also near the old Klondyke trail. There are several churches in this town including both the Greek Catholic and the Greek Orthodox. The fire ranger informed me that the land around here is mostly prairie and park land. This area is larger than the whole of England, with no settlers.

Dunvegan is about 25 miles west of Fairview. There is an old Hudson's Bay trading post which is perhaps the oldest in the Peace River country having been built about 200 years ago. Some of the buildings are still standing but the post was abandoned about 30 years ago. Dunvegan was at one time the head trading post for the whole of the Peace River district and Fort Chipewyan. Fred Bedson was the last Chief Factor at Dunvegan and is now retired and living in Spirit River. After two epidemics at the beginning of the century and the flu epidemic in 1918, most of the population of Dunvegan which was largely Beaver Indians, died out. They were an unhealthy lot at their best. The writer remembers seeing the bodies of these people covered with scabs from scurvy, a very common disease among the Indians.

There is also the remains of the old Roman Catholic log church and the Biblical paintings can still be seen on the rough boards of the interior. The writer was told that the Rev. Fathers removed some valuable old painting which had been done on moose hides. It is said that it was here that the late Anglican Bishop Bompus, the first missionary in the district, baptized the first Indians of the district.

Hudson's Hope is at the end of the navigable portion of the Upper Peace River. There is a Hudson's Bay trading post, hotel, stores and a neat little Anglican church made of rounded logs. The main industry is derived from the coal mines, four of which are being worked on a small scale. This coal is on a par with Pennsylvania or British coal but due to lack of transportation facilities, it is of little commercial value as yet.

There also, is a great canyon known as the Peace River Canyon which has enough potential power to supply the whole of the Peace River district when it is harnessed. There is a lot of trapping done in the district and in the summer the town is busy catering to the tourist trade.

Sixty miles down the river is Fort St. John. The old fort was built on the river, but the Hudson's Bay Company have now moved it up to the new town. There are several departmental stores and fine hotels. The provincial government maintains a strong police force at Fort St. John and they have a very large territory to control. Here also is a large modern airport which can accommodate the heaviest cargo ship. Fort St. John is on the Alaska Highway. A man I was talking to told me that the American government, who built this famous road, have presented the Canadian government with this highway and that it is now operated by Canadians.

Taylor Flats is half way between Fort St. John and Dawson Creek. It was named after Herbie Taylor, who lived and farmed in the district for over 45 years. The community is right at the foot of the Peace River bridge. The industries of the surrounding country consist of farming and lumbering.

A few miles further down the road is Dawson Creek which is the head of the steel for the Northern Alberta Railways. The population is about 5,000 and it is said that in the boom days of 1940-44 it swelled to 10,000. It is also the jumping off place for the Alaska Highway and is the terminal for all the roads in the Peace River country. The British Columbia government is building a ten million dollar highway from Prince




George to Dawson Creek which has already cost six millions and is far from being completed.

The town is fully modern and has many elevators, churches, hotels and departmental stores. The writer wishes to thank Mr. Schaffer, the owner of the New Dawson Hotel, for all his kindnesses during his stay in Dawson Creek. There are still several American army buildings to be seen in the town but it is said that they have been sold to the Canadian government.

Four miles from Dawson Creek is the town of Pouce Coupe which is the seat of the government for the Peace River Block of British Columbia and is also the head of the Department of Public Works for the district. The name Pouce Coupe was taken from the name of a Beaver Indian who lived there some 150 years ago.

A few miles west of Pouce Coupe is Toupper Creek which was settled by the Suedattens some years ago. The British and Canadian governments financed the venture jointly and it has proven successful as these people were hard workers and good farmers. The land is watered by three rivers, the Swan, the Dawson Creek and the Pouce Coupe River.

Hythe is situated about half way between Dawson Creek and Grande Prairie, and is the centre of a very good farming district. The town has several stores, two hotels, five elevators and three churches, the Roman Catholic, Anglican and Lutheran. Hythe is the main centre for miles around and serves such districts as Valhalla which is largely a Norwegian settlement. A Norwegian minister by the name of Ronigen was the leader of the colony when it moved to Valhalla in the early days. The whole of the



Grande Prairie country is sprinkled with Scandinavian settlers.

A few miles further on is Beaverlodge. One hundred years ago this district was covered with heavy timber but the late Tom Carr and Bishop Grouard, who were camping on the banks of the Beaver Lake, let their fire get away from them and it burned the whole of the Beaver Lake country, leaving it a prairie.

The first settlers came in the early part of the century and many of them had South African scripts. Some of the old-timers were Swede Hog Johnson, Rutabaga Johnson, Turkey Johnson and Pretty Wife Johnson, Dennis Allison and Sam and Charlie McNutt.

R. Steel told me the following story:

Henry and Bert Nichols, two Scottish boys, who had deserted the British Navy, were making their way to the Beaverlodge area. When they arrived, they had very little to eat and found a pig. After butchering it, they gave some of the meat to the lawful owner. Some years later they were summoned into court and the Justice of the Peace, Bill Grant, asked them: "Did you shoot at the horses?" They answered "Yes." He then asked them: "Did you shoot a pig?" and they answered, "Yes," thus confessing to something which had almost been forgotten.

Another story that Mr. Steel told was about an ex-policeman and a homesteader, Mr. Law. It seems that one of his neighbors killed a moose out of season and when Mr. Law heard about it he decided that he would like to have a little moose meat for his meals. He dressed in an old uniform and dropped in to see the man, telling

him that he was a police officer and confiscated the whole moose.


In 1909 the Burnside colony came into this district. They left Edmonton with 17 ox teams and 31 persons, with Mr. Gordon in charge. These people were known as the Bull outfit or Burnsiders and had broken away from the Methodist church in Toronto. Some of their descendants are living in the district today.

The people of the district are very progressive and they built the first school in the Grande Prairie country. It is said that the Beaverlodge farmers bought a million dollars worth of Victory Bonds during the last war. These people are now working on a large community centre which is costing them \$65,000.00 and will take in a dance hall, theatre, game room, etc.

Beaverlodge has a very large experimental station which is owned and operated by the government. Mr. Albright was the manager of this farm for many years and his passing was mourned by all. It is believed that this man did more for the material benefit of the north country than any other person through his experiments with fruits and vegetables. People called him Luther Burbank the second.

While following the highway or the railway in this part of the country, in some places one can see the Rocky Mountains which are from 40 to 80 miles away. I do not think that there is any one who could travel in this part of the country and not think that it was indeed beautiful.

Some twenty miles from Beaverlodge is the village of Wembley which is in the heart of a lumbering area. There is also some farming done near here. The town itself is rather small with



a few elevators, stores and public buildings. A great many of the settlers are German Americans and are very good farmers.

Dimsdale is a small station between Wembley and Grande Prairie, and is well known because it was the home for many years of Crane Williams, who was a rancher in the district. He came here from the British Diplomatic Service in the Far East. He has a large command of the Asiatic languages and is a silver tongued orator. The writer visited his home which is filled with many ancient and valuable pieces of art from eastern lands. I was particularly taken with a medicine chest which was made of teak wood and inlaid with silver and gold. He was made a canon by his friend Bishop of Athabasca, and travelled around the country preaching in the different churches at his own expense. He is a great Mason and a few years ago was the Grand Master for Alberta.

Grande Prairie is the largest town in the Alberta block of the Peace River country. It was homesteaded first by Mr. Bredon and Mr. MacCulley who sold their homesteads for less than it would take to buy a business lot in the town today. The town itself is fully modern with several hotels, departmental stores and churches. It is the centre of the wholesale trade for the whole north country. Every type of business is represented here, and with the building of the Alaska Highway, Grande Prairie grew by leaps and bounds. The writer thinks that Grande Prairie is about the size Edmonton was about 50 years ago.

I met an old-timer named Mr. Greentree who told me that twelve of them struck out for the

Klondyke but they split up at Athabasca, six going back and six going on. Along the trail four of the men died of scurvy so only two got through. One of these men came from Calgary and he said that a cushion factory there was working full time making pack saddles.

Mr. Greentree also told another story of the time when he was working in Calgary for the Canadian Pacific Railway. At that time an Indian by the name of Almighty Voice, killed two Mounted Policemen and entrenched himself in a poplar bluff where he held the police off for several days. Mr. Greentree informed the police that 32 fully armed Indians were riding in to help Almighty Voice. One Mounted Policeman rode ten miles to meet the Blackfeet and persuaded them to lay down their arms and return to town.

Mr. Greentree was one of the first settlers in the Drumheller district and found the first skeleton of a dinosaur which was 100 feet long. Some Americans from New York came and boxed the skeleton by dividing it into sections and encasing them in plaster of Paris. He says that this dinosaur is now mounted in a museum in New York. Mr. Greentree lost two sons in the first World War and one in World War II.

Through the kind permission of Mrs. Patterson I am using the following excerpt from some of her writings.

Mrs. Patterson's parents came to this country from Ontario and the late Mr. Patterson was the first Conservative Member of Parliament in this riding. Mr. and Mrs. Patterson left Edmonton for Grande Prairie in the winter of 1911. After travelling many days they came to Lesser Slave Lake where they overtook another party

going to Grande Prairie. This party was composed of Mr. and Mrs. Joe Moore, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Cocherne, and Dr. and Mrs. Bradford. Several days later, a little this side of High Prairie, they came to a spruce forest. The trail here was so narrow that they often had to cut out trees so they might get through. Finally they arrived at Sturgeon Lake where they met Pete Tomkins, the first Dominion land agent in the Peace River country. A few days later they arrived at the Smokey River which is perhaps as large as the North Saskatchewan. After crossing the Smokey, they camped at Bezanson's (the district still bears this name). The Bezansons were very fine people and made everyone welcome. In this party were also Hayes, Ike Nelson, Smith, Harry Adair, and Paul and Tom Walker. The party also included the MacFarlane outfit composed of twenty-two men and thirty some horses nearly all thoroughbred stock.

There was also Herman Trelle, who in later years won the championship for raising the best wheat three years in succession at the Chicago World Fair.

At this time Rev. Mc<sup>FORBES</sup>Forbes, a Presbyterian minister, came in and with willing hands built a log church. In about a year a missionary nurse arrived who looked after the sick.

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## Sexsmith

Sexsmith is the principal town between Grande Prairie and Spirit River. It derived its name from a man of the same name, who was the fastest dog driver and runner in the whole of the Peace River district. Some of the old-

timers still there are Bing Forster and Ed Gillan. A most popular man and everybody's friend is Dr. Gamey.

There are seven elevators in the town, several departmental stores and banks, a high school and a public school. There are also Anglican, United, Scandinavian, Lutheran and Roman Catholic churches. The town is drawing trade 75 miles away from the railroad. It is said to be the largest shipping point in the Peace River country.

## Roycroft *RYCROFT*

Roycroft is a fair-sized town with railroad shops, a high school, a Roman Catholic church, a United church, a bank, and many new buildings being erected. There is a good hotel, a large community hall, and various different businesses are represented there. A new hospital is just being erected. The population in the town and the surrounding country is mostly Ukrainian. The streets are lined with cars and trucks and Roycroft appears to be a prosperous town.

## Spirit River

Spirit River is an old Indian name and was once a Hudson's Bay Company post. The farmers were at one time mostly halfbreeds, although now many of them have sold their holdings. Mr. Bedson is the old H. B. C. manager of Fort Dunvegan and is now retired. Other old-timers are Jim Dodds, J. K. Smith, Dan<sup>V</sup> Vider and Charlie Bremner. Mr. T. A. Clark, Clydesdale, England, says: "Spirit River is the finest country in the world." Spirit River is built on a gentle slope giving it very fine drainage. It has six elevators, several big stores and good hotels as well as

various churches, also a Masonic and an I.O.O.F. hall. The Dawson Creek highway passes through the town. The train runs into Spirit River every day from Roycroft, four miles away and has to back out on the one-way track.

It is said that one Sunday the minister in one of the churches in Spirit River was speaking on temperance and towards the conclusion of his sermon he said: "All intoxicating liquors should be destroyed by throwing them into the river!" Then he added: "Now we shall sing for our closing hymn 'Let us gather at the river'."

There are several small villages and lumber camps along the way.

## Sturgeon Lake

About 65 miles north of High Prairie is the village of Sturgeon Lake at the junction of the old Grouard and Edson trail, which was used by the pioneers before the railroad was built. There is a H.B.C. trading post. The population is all Indian, but lately farmers are beginning to take up the surrounding land in the district. There is a large Roman Catholic church, a convent and a school mostly for Indian children.

Mr. Hamlin informed me that 100 years ago the country was covered with heavy timber but forest fires have destroyed it, so that now great patches of it are prairie land. Alec Williamson, one of the first white settlers, came from Scotland and was many years ago captain of the writer's steamboat. He is now one of the big traders and is believed to be well off. The writer also remembers an old Scotch trader by the name of Angus MacLean. At times when Angus was under the influence of alcohol, he would throw



his hands in the air and exclaim: "I would die for the H. B. C.!"

Sturgeon Lake is about 14 miles long and the government has reserved all the fish in the lake to be consumed by the people in the Peace River country. Several miles from Sturgeon Lake is Fish Creek. It is still in the homesteading stage and the land is watered by many creeks. The land is very rich, and the roads are still trails, but the settlers are contented.

### Valley View

About 12 miles north is Valley View, a farm settlement 50 miles from the nearest railroad. The Sturgeon Lake - Dawson Creek highway runs through it. One of the old settlers is Mr. Clough. He used to work with the H. B. C. in Northern Ontario and runs a trading post and store at Valley View on the co-op plan. This district is drained by the Little Smokey River. The settlers are nearly all Scandinavians. It is a lovely settlement and the farmers are a good, progressive, enterprising lot.

Just recently an old halfbreed Indian woman passed away, the widow of Mr. Pete Tompkins. He was the first government land agent in the Peace River district and used to travel in all directions taking homesteaders' applications. He was born in Ottawa, but raised among the Prairie Indians, so he spoke Cree fluently. During the early days of the Riel Rebellion he was taken prisoner in Betsosse, and as the Indians had already killed some white men and one Roman Catholic priest, some of the tougher Indians suggested that they should shoot the prisoners. But the Chief Poundmaker's sixth wife, then a young

girl, interceded and the prisoners were spared. Pete married the princess, who lived to be about 90 years of age and was surrounded with great grandchildren.

When the writer was coming down from Dawson Creek, he met His Excellency Bishop Coudert, O.M.I., of the Vicariate of Whitehorse, and he told me the Alaska Highway was in splendid condition. The buses were running all the time to and fro the whole length of the highway and there were also many trucks and cars along the way. He said that the railroad should be built from Churchill on the Hudson Bay, straight west through Yellowknife and the Yukon, and on to the Pacific Coast. He had been in charge of several missions on the MacKenzie River and said that there would be no engineering problem in building this railroad which would shorten the distance to England by several thousand miles. He has about forty children in the Grouard Indian school, mostly orphans, and says there are many Indian tribes in the Yukon. During an Indian celebration there are several hundred of them present representing about 75 different languages so that one cannot understand the other. They all speak broken English. The Coast Indians are born traders and very clever, much above the inland Indians, mentally. When Alaska was Russian territory they used to send the Coast Indians into the interior to trade and they were destroying the H. B. C. trade.

I trust the good Bishop will forgive me, as I did not ask his permission to write the above.

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# **Trials of the Pioneer**

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The following is an address prepared by the late W. D. Albright, and given to the Sudeten settlers by Mr. Stacey, Superintendent of the Dominion Experimental Station at Beaverlodge.

Mluvite Chesky?

Sprechen Sie Deutsch?

Or can you all understand English?

I hope you do, for I cannot say much in any other language.

At your own insistance and through the courtesy of Mr. Siemens, I have come to you in a trying time in the hope of bringing some words of encouragement and help.

Ever since this colony was established in the spring of 1939, the staff at our station has followed your progress with sympathetic interest. Some of the crops you are growing are the result of our experimental work, e. g., Olli barley and Legacy oats. At least two of my assistants, Messrs. Stacey and Moore, as well as myself, have visited your colony and conferred regarding its problems. We have met some of you personally and are genuinely interested in you all. I have tried to imagine myself suddenly wrenched from my home by war, succoured by an ally, thrown among strange although hospitable people, speaking a different language, then being transported five or six thousand miles to a pioneer region, obliged to learn a new occupation in which everything was strange, then before getting really on my feet, to run into a season such as this, with a good crop prsopect, but with 57 rainy days out of 83 from July 20th to October 11th — I need

not picture the rest. You know it only too well. It must be very trying indeed.

In such a case the experience of the past is helpful. We read the future by the past. I have lived almost 28 years in the Peace. I have been through the mill myself and have learned some "wrinkles" as we say. If I can pass them along to you, or if in any way at any time our station can be of service to you, it will be a very great pleasure indeed. "It is a pleasure as well as a duty to serve." Please regard us as your friends.

Pioneering nearly always spells privation. World over, it is the price exacted by Nature for the privilege of virgin opportunity. It has been the case with the settlement of practically all new regions. Sometimes the privation takes one form; sometimes another, but always there are tests of courage and fortitude. They vary from region to region but they have hardship in common. There is nothing like perspective. So it is pleasing to find that you wished this address to begin with the experiences of the Red River colonists. It indicates a breadth of vision and outlook on the part of those responsible for the programme.

### The Red River Colony

The Red River Colony was founded with a grant of land at the junction of the Red and Assiniboine rivers in what is now Manitoba. It was established by Lord Selkirk, partly as a colonization enterprise and partly to provide homes for crofters dispossessed of their holdings in the Highlands of Scotland. Some of the settlers were from Ireland. The first main party of settlers arrived in 1812, by way of Hudson's Bay. Their trials en route have been aptly told in story and

history, but we shall pass that over. Even before they left their homes they were beset with terrorism and propaganda from Lord Selkirk's rivals who wished to kill his enterprise.

The first fall they arrived they sowed fall wheat and the next year, spring wheat. Their first harvest was a failure. It was again a failure in 1814, but in 1815 it was successful. At first there was no plow in the colony, only an incomplete harrow. Practically all work was done with the hoe. Harvests in the early years were threatened by immense flocks of passenger pigeons. In 1815, native employees of the Northwest Company over-awed the colony and committed depredations. Some of Lork Selkirk's colonists went to Upper Canada and some to Norway House, but John McLeod and three others defended themselves with a three-pounder cannon, fed with lengths of chain from a blacksmith's shop. (You today do not have to take the responsibility for keeping law and order. Our police attend to that). The settlers, who had fled to Norway House, returned. In 1816, 40 bushels of wheat and barley were sown, having been saved from the previous crop, but civil war again drove them from their homes.

In the spring of 1817 they were brought back and sowed a little wheat, but in the autumn this was almost ruined by a hurricane, so they had to live largely on buffalo meat.

For a few years the colony was plagued with grasshoppers. On August 2nd, 1818, they were two or three inches deep in places. As the grain was in the ear and the barley almost ripe, a cloud of hoppers from the West darkened the air and fell like a heavy shower of snow. Everything

perished save a few ears of half ripe barley gleaned in the women's aprons. Once more the settlers left their homes and went to Pembina to live on buffalo meat. The following year their hopes were defeated by countless swarms of the grasshoppers bred on the spot, even the water being poisoned with them. Every green thing was consumed, even to the bark on the trees. Fires kindled out of doors were extinguished, and the land stank with the odour of their decaying bodies.

In 1820 the settlement had to obtain seed wheat from Wisconsin, 250 bushels being brought in flat-bottomed boats, arriving in June. Grasshoppers appeared for the third time, but suddenly vanished and the wheat harvest, though immature, made seed. After this the colony never again lacked seed wheat until 1868, when another mighty swarm of locusts destroyed the crops.

In 1821 the advent of a band of Swiss colonists overtaxed the food supply and the colony almost faced starvation. In 1824 they reaped their first truly satisfactory crop of grain, but it had to be cut with a sickle, threshed with a flail and ground into flour with a quern.

In 1825 mice almost destroyed the stooks of grain. In the spring of 1826, after a long, hard winter, with three feet of snow, a flood raised the water fifteen feet above the level of previous years, and early in May the settlers had to abandon their dwellings, some of which went floating away to Lake Winnipeg. Not until June 15th could anything be sown, yet some of the crops came to maturity.

Subsequent trials included trouble with the milling of the grain and the finding of a market for the flour, while in 1846 came a disease known

as the "bloody flux," ten times more virulent than the Spanish influenza. Floods occurred again in 1852 and 1861, grasshoppers devastations in 1857, '58, '64, '67 and '68. Besides all these, the settlement had suffered in its early days at the hands of dissolute, incompetent and unfaithful governors, thus in turn running the gauntlet of frost, war, hurricane, grasshoppers, famine, mice, floods, graft and plague. Still they persevered and because they did, Manitoba is what it is today. I often say to myself when tempted to discouragement: Let us remember the Red River pioneers, gird up our loins, persevere and succeed.

### Struggles of the Ontario Pioneers

The southern peninsula of Ontario, generally known as old Ontario, is today accounted one of the safest farming districts in the world. Frost as a hazard of small grain crop is unthought of. Wet and dry years come but failure from flood and drought is practically unknown. It is a land of comfortable farm homes where a great variety of crops, including corn, small fruits, tree fruits and good gardens are almost universal. Yet the early settlers of Old Ontario had their troubles too!

From a book called "The Pioneers of Old Ontario" I glean these facts about the hardships of the early settlers in Eastern Ontario, at Gananoque, north of the St. Lawrence River. Those settlers were what are called United Empire Loyalists, because after the war of the American Revolution they chose to come to Canada and carve out new homes for themselves rather than live under the flag of the newly formed American Republic.

Three years after the arrival of the first group of settlers at Gananoque, the crops, owing to frost, were almost a total failure. The British Government was no longer doling out aid as it did at the start and famine stalked through the land. In 1788, money was sent to Montreal and Quebec for flour but the answer came back "We have none to spare." In some places along the lower St. Lawrence cornmeal was meted out by the spoonful, wheat flour was unknown and millet seed was ground as a substitute. Here and there in sheltered spots the wheat crop escaped the frost and ripened early. The starving inhabitants flocked to those crops before they were ripe, plucked the milk heads and boiled them into a kind of gruel. Half-starved children haunted the banks of the river begging sea biscuits from the passing boatmen. Beef bones were boiled again and again, boiled brán was a luxury, ground nuts and even ground buds of trees were eagerly devoured. Fortunately, rabbits and pigeons were plentiful and these saved many settlers from actual starvation.

### The Summerless Year

Old-timers used to tell about the summerless year of Ontario. A man at Oakville, along Lake Ontario, west of where Toronto now stands, recalled that the spring of 1816 opened with fair prospects, but snow commenced falling in June and until spring came again, the whole country was continuously covered by a wintry blanket. No doubt this was an exaggeration, but practically nothing was gathered in the way of a crop. There was no flour, there were no vegetables. People lived for twelve months on fish and meat,



venison, porcupine and groundhog being varied with the thin meat of cattle slaughtered because there was no fodder for them. Hay was sent from Ireland to save the stock of the starving people of Quebec. Even the following year flour was \$70.00 per barrel at Quebec. All the country was full of stories of the horrors endured during the winter of a year's duration.

Happily 1817 was prolific.

I need not worry you with all the other instances of hardship that could be cited, but I read once that at Moose Factory, at the south end of James Bay, cattle wintered one year on potatoes and fish.

Some years ago I read in the Family Herald and Weekly Star an article by Hon. Duncan Marshall (once Minister of Agriculture for Alberta) telling how the Scotch settlers of Halton County along the north shore of the western end of Lake Ontario found they could ripen neither wheat nor potatoes because of frost and moved away to higher but poorer land. Today anyone who questioned the safety of wheat or potatoes in that region, would be laughed out of face.

I have heard my own father tell about the early experiences of his grandfather, who came to Southern Ontario from some place in Germany. I do not know where, but it is supposed to be Lichtenberg. Perhaps some of you can tell me where that is. At all events my great-grandfather trudged many a time to the grist mill through a forest trail 12 or 15 miles long with a sack of grain on his back going, and a sack of flour returning. To resist the winter cold he had only linen trousers and linen shirt or smock, with no underwear. Many a time he wished he were back

in Germany, but there were no railroads to take people back easily in those days, and like countless other pioneers he stayed because he had to. It was "root hog, or die" so he rooted. The time came when he was very glad that he had not been able to return. He became well established as a successful farmer with a very fine farm home. We do not always know what is best for us.

### Early Experiences in the Peace

**The Beaverlodge Settlement.** While Ontario and Manitoba episodes are fortifying it is more profitable to consider experiences nearer home.

The first considerable body of settlers in one neighborhood of the Grande Prairie district were "the Bull Outfit" so styled because they left Edmonton with 18 yoke of oxen or "bulls" as they were slangily called. Setting out in April, 1909 for Beaverlodge by summer trail, they never rested until they got there in July, nearly three months later. On the second of May they crossed the Athabasca River on ice and report says the temperature was eight below zero. That didn't look like an agricultural country, yet today it is a prosperous farming region and within 15 miles of that crossing, apples, crabapples and plums have been produced by the wagon load!

The Beaverlodge settlers, like other early arrivals, travelled via Lesser Slave Lake, Peace River, Dunvegan, Sprit River and Grande Prairie — 500 miles to Beaverlodge. (The winter trail was a hundred miles shorter). At Lesser Slave Lake they stopped to cut cordwood for the steamboat in order to earn passage for the women and heavy freight up the lake. Some of the men took the oxen along the north shore and beat the steam-

boat into Grouard. Mud, flies and mosquitoes beset their path, being particularly bad at the wood camps. Food ran low and was rationed. The working men grew thin on soup. But their goal was Beaverlodge and their motto, "One day at a time."

No homes awaited them. The land was unsurveyed. They squatted on approximate locations figured out by driving a wagon over the land and counting the revolutions of the wheel. They tented until they could throw up log shacks. Some lived under canvas until December in away below zero weather. In these the men, women and children were healthier than they were later on in warm homes. There were no doctors and they hadn't time to be sick.

They hurriedly broke some open ground and sowed it to winter wheat, the seed for which they had flailed out on shares for Meade and Grant of Lake Saskatoon. When they went to town, as they did once a year in winter, it was at first a 900-mile trip — 450 out and 450 back. They learned to think and provide ahead. Dried fruit was the only kind purchased. Berries and game were obtained locally. It is true they had a little financial backing from the East but mostly they "rustled."

In the early days most of the crop was stacked and as threshing outfits were few, it was not uncommon for steam outfits to be trundled about scrunching through deep snow until on into December or even January. Often the snow had to be pitched off the stacks before threshing operations commenced.

### **My Personal Experience**

I came to the Peace myself in October, 1913

after ten years' agricultural journalism in Eastern Canada. (I would like to diverge here and relate some of my financial experiences but these must be kept for another time).

In 28 years in the Peace I have seen 28 kinds of seasons, for the only regular feature of the climate is irregularity. I have seen seeding commence as early as March, and again as late as the middle of May. I have seen winter set in to stay once as early as October 20th. Again I have been plowing on the last day of November and roses were blooming at the beginning of that month. The law of compensation generally applies. If seeding is late, growth may be extra rapid or fall frosts deferred. He who watches his opportunity generally gets it. Many a time the situation has been discouraging, but always we have pulled through, though sometimes in looking back we wondered how we did it.

One of the commonest troubles has been a tantalizing interruption by rain or snow at threshing time. Seldom have we escaped it, though never in my experience, has there been quite such a trying and prolonged period of wet weather as in 1941. Always before we have been able to get the threshing done and in only two or three cases has it been necessary to thresh the grain in a tough condition if one took it cool and "kept his shirt on." I have learned much by watching a neighbour who always keeps his head and gets through surprisingly well in the end. This year he is waiting to combine his crop. We shall see how he makes out in that. I would not want to be in his boots this year.

3

### Twenty-Eight Seasons at Beaverlodge

Shall we review the past 28 seasons as they came and went? You won't remember the details but you will see that I am speaking from actual records in what I suggest. 1913 was a wet summer with a snowstorm in mid October. Considerable threshing was done after I arrived on October 26th.

1914. In the spring of 1914 I spent the better part of three days and three nights fighting prairie fires to protect my land and crops. It was a very fair crop year.

1915. Nineteen-fifteen was a bumper year, with practically everything safely harvested, but early in September that year (about the 10th or 11th) it began to freeze at 2:00 o'clock one afternoon, spoiling the crowns of the mangles for keeping. I snatched in the pumpkins and we had pumpkin pie for Tranksgiving Day. There was a delay in threshing on account of wet weather but big yields of fine grain were secured safely.

1916. In 1916 we had a frost on the morning of the 10th of August, catching most of the grain in the milk. Only a few fields on the safest land made passable seed.

1917. The next year was an average one with a mid-May snow and a month of saturation thereafter. My recollection is that we had an early autumn snowstorm compensated by an open November, but I am not sure of this.

1918. In 1918, there was a blossom frost on the mornings of the 23rd and 24th of July, so that the great bulk of the grain was stacked for cattle fodder. It was needed the next year.

1919. The summer of 1919 was droughty for a while, but rains came in time to make a good crop. Harvest, however, was a problem. On October 8th a cold dry spell set in, freezing many potatoes in the ground. A week of good weather ensued and then on October 20th winter set in with a heavy snowfall which did not completely leave the ground until well on in the following May. During the week of good weather I was busy sorting out frosted potatoes from a pile that had been dug early in the month and was stored where it was thought to be safe, so we did not get our experimental threshing done before the winter set in. Day by day the snow piled deeper and drifted besides. The stooks were buried. Prairie chickens began to eat the precious test plots. Morning after morning I walked back with a shotgun through one or two feet of packed snow to shoot the chickens off the stooks. It looked as if we would never get threshed. Finally the chinooks took away part of the snow, clearing first the narrow space around the stook, except on the north-east side where the drifts were much deeper. More than once we went back with hoes or shovels to remove these drifts. Finally, well on in November we got the stooks dry enough to thresh. In those days the experimental station had no threshing equipment for test plots except a club, so we hauled the stooks down on sleighs and beat them out in the cold open-front shed. The grain was tough but it saved, and big yields were obtained. I do not remember about the commercial threshing that year but I think much of it was done in the snow. Over eleven feet of snow fell that winter and though there was a good crop, so much livestock had been brought

into the country from the south, and the feeding period was so lengthy, that fodder ran short long before the winter was over. Starving cattle huddled in disused buildings where some of them jammed and perished. Old straw covers of stables were sold for a ransom price. More than one man sold his straw cover for enough money to buy lumber for a good one. Straw was hauled 25, 30 or more miles over deep drifted roads and could hardly be had for love or money. Cattle owners spent more in feed than their herds were worth. Towards spring some of them cut down trees for the cattle to eat the browse. The irony of it was that cattle prices slumped that year and by fall many a herd was not worth more than a quarter of what it had cost to winter it. This experience taught many of us that in this region it was unwise to stock up to the limit of one's average carrying capacity. A big margin of safety is advisable and it pays to carry over feed reserves and to stack and save straw against the day of need.

1920. The summer of 1920 was a wet season with a late seeding and a catchy harvest. Threshing was completed in early December.

1921. Nineteen twenty-one was the third successive season with copious rainfall in the later months. It is the ruling tendency in this northern climate. Some good crops were nevertheless produced.

1922. In 1922 there was a drought, with only  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches of rainfall from seeding to harvest — less than 2 inches from May 16th to the end of August — yet even that year we had 19 bushels of wheat on a measured acre which had raised

potatoes the year before. The land was clean and all the moisture went to feed the crop. Threshing presented no undue difficulties that year.

1923. Nineteen twenty-three was comparatively dry in the Peace but a great deal of the rain came in July, so that while hay was short, grain filled well and harvest was accomplished under ideal weather conditions.

1924. One of the most trying years of my experience was 1924, when we had both drought and grasshoppers. The wheat that year on summer-fallow yielded only about six or eight bushels to the acre. Oats were about as poor, but late rains came and started a suckering growth of the oats, which overtopped the first growth and headed out. Nearly all the oats were left standing in the hope that this late growth might fill, but finally the crop had to be cut after it was flattened by a late September frost ushering three days of rain, snow and sleet. The crop was finally threshed or stacked during an open, rainy autumn and hundreds of stacks all over the country began to steam. A device found useful that year for the preservation of tough oat bundles was an A-shaped rack of poles against which the bundles were piled, heads inward, butts sloping outward, so that air could circulate through the narrow stacks.

1925. Nineteen twenty-five was a dry, grasshopper season. Nevertheless a fair yield of high-grade grain was produced. Crops were better that year north of the Peace. Threshing was practically complete by the middle of October.

1926. After a very mild winter, seeding opened early in 1926. All went well until June 8th, when



a drizzle of rain turned to snow that continued into the fourth day, accumulating to a depth of ten inches. Many a newcomer would have sold out cheap. Old-timers hoped it would kill the grasshoppers. It didn't, but they all died of natural causes later in the summer. One could see them attached to the heads of grain and grass. That snowstorm made the crop. Our barley plots ran from 67 to 93 bushels per acre; oats 95 to 151; wheat 55 to 68. Threshing and the harvesting of late crops was interrupted by bad weather in September though not to anything like the extent farther south. Threshing was cleaned up during three weeks' fine weather ending November 6th. Storms threatened daily but didn't break until then. There was a much lighter crop north of the Peace and even in Pouce Coupe.

1927. A phenomenal crop all over the Peace was grown in 1927, when Charlie Anderson, north of Rolla, threshed 77.4 bushels per acre of Red Bobs on 22 acres after the pigs had got some! Rain and snow were, however, persistent throughout most of September and October, weathering the grain and frosting some. There was some tough grain that year, but the crop got threshed. However, Alberta's best grades of wheat that year came from the Peace and a large quantity of seed oats was shipped out.

1928. A late seeding in 1928 was followed by the earliest harvest on record. The crop was a scant average in yield but was of high grade and the autumn was wonderfully fine and dry for getting work done.

1929. In 1929 threshing was interrupted by a rain on September 20th, turning to heavy snow,

the ground being covered a foot deep, the precipitation being estimated at 4 inches. The snow disappeared slowly but threshing was finally accomplished with the aid of snatch teams on the bundle wagons. Threshing was practically completed by October 12th.

1930. Cutworms were troublesome in 1930, and wireworms took their usual toll. There were touches of frost. Three-quarters of the wheat was cut in August. The September weather sheet was speckled with precipitation records, but a timely chinook averted sprouting in the stook. Snow and frost occurred in October, catching much garden stuff. A week of windy weather at the end of October finally afforded excellent opportunity for threshing so that 90% of the wheat was threshed by the 31st, and the next week finished it. Perhaps two-thirds of the wheat of the Peace graded tough. The crop was good.

1931. During the phenomenally mild winter of 1930-31 a disturbing amount of soil drifting occurred on old farms. Seeding was early. A streak of hail shattered a seeding of grain. Harvest was early; yields were a full average and grades good. Frequent light rains in September postponed threshing but it was all accomplished when freeze-up occurred on November 9th.

1932. After a long cold winter with deep snow in Grande Prairie, volunteer spring wheat resumed growth in the spring. The summer was rather dry and hot. Grains yielded lightly but made high grades. September was too dry for fall plowing.

1933. Again in the winter of 1932-3 there was a steady snow cover and little ground freezing.

Spring opened slowly and seeding was late. Rabbits had become very numerous and did extensive damage to shrubbery. In spite of a hot dry August maturity was protracted. Severe frosts at the end of August and the beginning of September wrought widespread damage. Inclement weather impeded cutting and threshing, and early freeze-up on October 18th caught much crop unthreshed. A mild November permitted a little plowing from the 15th to the 18th, after which the land became too wet and remained so until it again crusted. Ruling wheat grades were No. 4, No. 5 and as low as feed.

1934. After a bitter stormy December the winter of 1933-4 brought mild, changeable weather with a chinook on January 26th, after which the country was sheathed with ice. There was considerable winter-killing of wheat and alfalfa. A very rainy-summer permitted rank crops and hay was cured with extreme difficulty. After a nice opening week a vicious September brought rain, snow and hard frost, flattening much crop with snow on the 10th. Some oat fields remained uncut. Threshing was accomplished in October but most of the grain was tough, damp or wet. The average wheat grade was about No. 4 and No. 5. The year's precipitation was 19.86 inches which occurred on 160 days, including days with mere sprinkles.

1935. Through a cold winter 1934-35, ninety-seven inches of snowfall protected over-wintering vegetation save protruding tips. Snow lay late. May rains were frequent and wheat seeding in the Grande Prairie district did not become general until May 20th. Precipitation occurred on

about two-thirds the days of the four growing months, the twelve month total being 24.07 inches, falling on 172 days, including sprinkles. Crops were ~~rank~~ and late. Haymaking was a nightmare. On August 14th several inches of soft snow lodged the crops. Subsequent frosts reduced yields and ravished grades. Average wheat grades in the Grande Prairie district were about No. 5. Route Coupe was more lightly visited by the frost. Plowing ceased about October the 26th.

1936. After a hard winter with intense cold in February, with a minimum reading of -47.5 F. (official) and -60 at the slough, 107 feet lower, seeding was completed in good time at Beaverlodge, and though the soil had been puddled in the spring, frequent rains gave good growth. Dry weather affected the crops in July, but grain was filled well in August and ripened without frost. Threshing was nicely started in September when a week of light frosts and scattering showers climaxed September 12th in a two-day driving snowstorm, estimated from twenty inches to two or three feet. Remnants of drifts were observed on the 29th. The snow blanket protected potatoes and flowers from 17 degrees of frost on the 16th. Considerable acreage of late oats was recovered with difficulty. October made handsome amends. Threshing was finished and considerable plowing done when snow and freezing occurred. Plowing was resumed during a long spell of summery weather in November and could have continued until December. Flowers were picked from the garden in the latter half of November. Grain yields were good and the ruling grade was No. 3 Northern.

1937. After an open autumn with 6.38 inches precipitation in September, October and November, winter was marked by considerable road drifting, little snow being left on the fields. Seeding time was about normal. A little soil drifting occurred in June, when wireworms were thinning some areas badly. Early wheat headed short. Grain filled rapidly during the last of July and first of August. There was heavy August rain after the crops were mostly filled. Wheat yields were affected by frost widespread throughout the district during the first week of August. Yields and grades were disappointing. September put nearly everything into the bin so that the Peace escaped the misfortune of belated harvest and protracted threshing, as at some other points. Threshing was completed early in October. Although the summer had seemed dry, the year's precipitation of 17.39 inches was above average and the summer precipitation of 9.27 inches was slightly above average, 3.85 inches having occurred in August after some crops were mature. The earlier summer rainfall had occurred mostly in light, ineffectual sprinkles, or in dashing rains which rapidly ran off.

1938. Drought, soil drifting, lashing winds, cutworms and low prices, harassed the Peace River farmers in 1938. The adverse situation was somewhat ameliorated by August rains and a fine open autumn, without hard frosts until November. The preceding winter had set in with scant moisture storage except in fallow. During a fine, moderate winter, cars had been able to run on the main highway and often on the sideroads as well. There had been no very extreme low temperatures. Seeding commenced about the

middle of April. Winter wheat had been affected by several periods of moderately cold weather when the ground was bare, or nearly so. A 47 mile per hour wind on May 12th, caused considerable soil drifting, continuing in diminishing degree the next two days. Multiplying in the dry May and June of 1937, cutworms had become seriously troublesome, eating some second-year stands of sweet clover to the ground or killing them outright. In gardens the havoc was terrible. There was some threat of grasshopper trouble. Beet webworms devastated some gardens. April to July precipitation of 2.67 inches was followed by 2.41 inches in August. At Grimshaw, July brought a hailstorm, destroying crops on an area six by ten miles. Good weather at the end of August continued into September, and in spite of a precipitation of 2.24 inches near the beginning of the month, it proved a wonderful month for fall work, for autumn growth and for maturity of tender crops, except on the low lands where they had been killed earlier. Threshing was completed in September under ideal conditions. Grades averaged about 2 Northern and 2 C. W. Garnet. Elsewhere in Alberta there were many oats to be threshed in October. The fine weather continued into October, roses showing bright hearts until November. The winter set in nicely and ideal weather continued until Christmas.

1939. Although the second wettest year on record according to precipitation tables, the cropping season of 1939 was rather droughty. The rain did not come soon enough for vegetables and in some sections cutworms took advantage of the delay. The precipitation total was 22.67 inches.

The dry condition of the soil at freeze-up in 1938 favored spring penetration of the 82 inches winter snowfall; the ground being soaked  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 3 feet, even in sod-covered knolls. Trees and shrubs wintered well. Seeding was timely. A little soil drifting occurred May 8th, when the wind attained gust velocity of 48 miles per hour. Red-backed cutworms were very numerous but rains finally checked their work. Crops failing from drought in early July, were greatly invigorated by a mid-July rain, soaking the grain fields 20 inches or more. Grain filled extra well. Hoppers edged into a few fields. August conditions were favorable and most of the crop was cut that month. The weather broke August 28th and then ensued one of the most exasperating threshing seasons on record, with tantalizing showers just as the grain was ready to thresh. Threshing was rushed under favorable conditions during the week ending September 23rd. There was precipitation on 20 days of September, with over one-hundredth of an inch or more on the 16th. The total was, however, only 2.02 inches. Frost visited gently. A general snowstorm set in October 4th with frost. There were three October snowfalls aggregating nearly twenty inches, which with 1.25 inches of rain, gave a monthly precipitation of 3.22 inches occurring in September, this including sprinkles on 15 days of over one-hundredth of an inch. Until marred by the weather wheat graded high, but much of the oats and a good part of the wheat tested tough or damp. Some bin heating occurred before winter set in. November was calm and mild with plowing done on the 30th.

1940. Whereas 1939 was one of the wettest sea-

sons on record from a precipitation standpoint, yet very dry from a cropping standpoint; 1940 was the reverse, having only 15.21 inches precipitation with enough of it occurring at the right season to make a good crop. August was dry. During a moderate winter the ground froze enough that snow melt in the spring penetrated only a moderate depth, but the good carryover gave an ample storage. North of the Peace winter snowfall and spring storage were much less than south of the river. Seeding was rather late. July made the grain crop and the gardens but gave haymakers plenty of headaches. July precipitation at Beaverlodge was 2.83 inches, but it was heavier at some other points. Temperature was normal; sunshine and wind low. Rains soon checked the grasshopper activity. At points east and north tent caterpillars were devastating. A warm, dry windy August was wonderfully favorable for ripening and harvesting of the crops. Yields were affected by root rots, by some shattering, by premature cutting, and by occasional touches of frost on low ground here and there. Harvest was virtually completed and threshing well advanced during a warm, calm, dry, sunny September. Autumn closed in ideally during October. On the upland of the station only a few of the tenderest plants showed appreciable evidence of frost injury until the temperature of 25.6 degrees on the morning of October 5th. Snowshoe rabbits were fairly plentiful during the winter of 1938-9 and early in the months of 1939-40, although somewhat irregular in prevalence from district to district. In the autumn of 1940 the station's horticultural grounds were rabbit-fenced for the second time in the present cycle.



1941. The season of 1941 promised well. Although the ground had frozen up very dry an early-winter snowfall kept it from freezing deeply. March brought a gradual spring thaw, the snow disappearing quietly and its moisture soaking in well. A warm April proved an ideal seeding month. May and June precipitation was on the whole favorable save for a dry spell in the forepart of the latter month. Mid-July brought a heat wave unprecedented in the quarter century, affecting the vigour of early crops, thus reducing yields and grades. This was relieved on the 20th by a showery period which has continued to date. From July 20th to October 11th, inclusive, there were only 26 days without precipitation and 57 with rain or snow.

What made matters worse was the large amount of warm, calm, muggy weather with little sun. It is noteworthy that for the last year or so wind velocity has been generally below the previous monthly averages. Spring frosts are believed to have caught much of the wild fruit in blossom, and at the beginning of September serious frost occurred in most parts of the Peace but spared the Grande Prairie district. The first appreciable injury at Beaverlodge occurred on September 20th.

### Lessons I Have Learned

One thing I have noticed through 28 years of pioneering experience, is this: That he who improves his opportunities nearly always has a chance to sow and to reap. The laggard may get caught and we all may have our misfortunes, but there is generally a chance to harvest and to thresh, however belated it may be.

Twenty-five years' records show that October, with 1.24 inches precipitation, is one of the driest months of the twelve, especially if September has been wet, and I still expect we shall take off the 1941 crop.

If not, and we have to let it stand over winter, we know that in districts between Calgary and Edmonton, considered quite safe for farming, the same thing has had to be done sometimes, and it is usually surprising how well the grain turns out when spring-threshed. Of course, rabbits, mice and birds do considerable damage, but we have to take that chance. People who lately threshed grain for pig feed, were surprised at how good it still was.

If the worst comes to the worst, and some of the crop gets snowed under before it can be cut, horses, cattle and even hogs may be turned on an oat crop to graze it off. A neighbor one winter pastured his milch cows on a piece of uncut oats until nearly Christmas and they did well on it. Of course, it is rather wasteful of feed as compared with cutting and threshing, but it is better than letting it rot. A good deal will depend upon the early winter snowfall.

Here are some other things I have learned:

The most valuable lessons are learned in adversity. Opportunity comes to those who wait. Do not get panicky and work to no purpose, but if in a case like the present one can scythe some lodged grain, it is better than sitting around fretting.

Prepare for the worst and be ready for the best. This is not a bad climate on the whole, but it can be cruel to the unprepared.

Play safe with early varieties and with me-

thods that tend to safe maturity. Early seeding does not invariably give the largest crop but it is safest and gives the best average yields of grain.

Raise a variety of things. Don't put all the eggs in one basket.

Keep close to a self-supporting basis, producing on the farm as much as possible of what the livestock and the family require. There may not always be a demand for what we wish to sell, but there is always a market for what we can eat and use. Never fail to plant and care for a good garden, putting the tender things on the higher slopes.

Keep livestock, but not too much. Better to sell surplus in a year of abundance — still better to carry it over. — than to have to buy on a famine market.

Build up and hold reserves of seed, feed and cash. Follow Joseph. For many years I have always carried over a year's supply of seed grain and nearly a full year's supply of feed. Stack the good, clean straw and hold it over against emergency.

Mixed farming steadies the flow of income, modifying the peaks and dips due to price fluctuation. In the autumn of 1923 oats were hardly worth the cost of threshing. One farmer shipped a carload out and got a bill for part of the freight. He replied that he had no money, but could send another car of oats. I held my oats over for feed. The next year was droughty and oats were a good price. I eventually marketed my 1923 crop through pigs at 13c a pound live weight.

A year ago everybody was worrying about big crops and low prices. Today the worry is how are we going to carry our pigs? Time and

again low oat prices have been alternated with high ones. A neighbor tells me that by carrying crop over from low-price years he has never had to sell oats for less than 20 cents a bushel. He feeds a good many. Granaries have paid me the best of anything on my farm.

Keep a good woodpile ahead against bad weather or sickness. I was pleased to see the neat woodpiles surrounding your cottages the first year you were here.

Be thorough in everything. Whether erecting a building, setting up a stook, building a stack or caring for a team or a piece of machinery, take pains. Oil is cheaper than castings.

There are many ways of stooking. After trying several we have adopted the long stook of paired sheaves, usually capping the wheat stooks with two cap sheaves, heads on heads, spread rooster-back fashion. If necessary in bad weather, the cap sheaves may be removed and stood at the south ends of the stooks.

In stacking, build high stacks on pole bottoms. Keep the sides of the stacks straight or bulging, and keep the middle full so that every layer will shed water, then if a little moisture soaks in, it will not penetrate deeply into the stack.

In a year like the present, it may pay to "rick" the feed in long narrow stacks not wider than the length of two sheaves. They should be built on poles and if a hollow centre can be provided, so much the better. We have used snow-fence panels to a limited extent this year, setting two together in an inverted V-shape, holding them with a loop of wire at the top. The poles are laid along each side for the bottom

sheaves to rest upon. The sheaves are laid heads against the panels and sloping outwards. The worst-sprouted sheaves are used to top out the stacks. The wet butts have a chance to dry out. The heads are to some extent protected from rabbits, mice and birds, although they will need to be fenced or rebuilt into high, compact stacks to protect from rabbits over winter. Loose grain cut with a scythe could be cured on such forms, which may be built of poles if snow-fence panels are not at hand. Tripods may also be used but larger forms are handier where the crop is thick. We have found tripods very helpful this summer curing hay, though sweet clover moulded a good deal in spite of them. They cured grass hay better.

As soon as possible, get together and keep a nest egg of cash. In farming, and especially in a new country, thrift is the secret of success. It is always easy to spend a dollar — not nearly so easy to get it back. Bargains come to the man with cash in hand.

Farm for the future. Keep the land clean. Keep it from washing and drifting. Do not haul straw from dirty farms. Do not break up draws where running water may cut out gullies. Top soil is precious. Take care of it. Husband the land — don't mine it. I like to feel that wherever I go, I leave things better for those who may come after me. There is pleasure in that thought.

### The Spirit that Wins

In civil life as in war, it is the unconquerable spirit that wins, the spirit of courage and pluck. Away back in 1922, when times were hard,

when drought, depression and despair of any railroad extension were discouraging people, I wrote a pamphlet "In the Trough of the Wave." It attracted more favorable comment than anything else I ever wrote. It opened this way:-

"Optimism strengthens purpose. Pessimism paralyzes effort. Both are infectious. To a large extent we make times good or bad according as we view our case with courage or despair."

Anyone can start things. It takes stamina to see them through. The sheet anchor of purpose is banking on one's decisions and his acts and carrying on. I have a son in the Air Force. Writing from seaboard on the eve of embarkation, he said: "Whatever comes, and God knows it may be tough in spots, take it from me, I have no regrets." And, again: "I try to look on the bright side of things. I find it not hard to do if one will just remember to trust God. I am not much at preaching, but I hope you know what I mean." We did. I commend that faith to all.

If one keeps his powder dry and does the best he can at all points, banking on every step taken as the best possible, because it has been taken trustingly in good faith, it gives a security of confidence to withstand adversity.

I hope you have that faith. I hope you salvage your crop, as I expect you will. I hope you stick it out and become good Canadian citizens. I hope you will always count us your friends.

It is a pleasure as well as a duty to serve.

## **CARBON RIVER COAL FIELD DRAWS FIRST FOREIGN CAPITAL INTO PEACE RIVER**

### **Contracts for Ferry Let at Hudson's Hope**

A new ferry, fourteen miles of new road and an option to diamond drill the Carbon Coal fields is one of the optimistic certainties that brighten up the spring program for the north side of the Peace River.

Some ten thousand feet of dimension lumber went up last week by team and sleigh from the Portage Lumber Company. Pen Powell cut the lumber at 12-mile on the Portage and delivered it into Gold Bar where Jim Beattie will build it into a new ferry 16 x 50 feet, just as soon as the weather permits. Construction of a new road 20 miles over a fairly accessible terrain will begin from opposite Gold Bar and proceed to the 11 mile Creek on the Carbon River.

All this development is from the decision of Swedish capitalists who have taken up an option on the Burns Foundation property. A representative of the Johnson Steamship lines, Swedish capitalized, spent a month or so up at Carbon last fall in the company of Cooper Rochfort of Calgary.

The road will have to be built to take in the equipment of some ten diamond drilling units. Cabins will be built for housing and also machine shops, etc. A small strip will be available for landing small planes.

Engineers at Fort St. John made a survey of this proposed road last fall for Burns Foundation. A contract will be let shortly for the construction of the road to be finished and ready for

machinery transport by June 1st. The ferry will be built immediately and will be propelled by power, to deliver the machinery and vehicles to the south side of the Peace River.

This is the first authentic attempt to explore the width and depth of the coal fields. Ten complete units will be moved in for diamond drilling. Work is expected to begin on the ground by June 15th. If the field is proven to be what it is expected by the geologists, the Swedish interests will take up their option for mining two million tons of coal a year, for export market.

The representative of this enterprise stated to the News last fall, that if the prospect is capable, and the coal of quality goes to depth and width, the capitalists will build their own railroad probably to the Pacific through the Portland Canal with wharving at Stewart, if the B. C. government doesn't provide an outlet for them.

The Burns Foundation has ten square miles of crown granted coal property at 11-mile Creek on the Carbon River which enters the Peace River about 12 miles above Gold Bar. This property has been held by Burns ever since 1924. The Gething coal fields were prospected and crown granted several years earlier, and from the Gething mines, this winter alone, five thousand tons have been mined out and delivered adjacent to the Alaska Highway. The coal at Gething has stood up, improved with mining, and as quality leaves nothing to doubt.

Mining facilities have been, so far, of the most primitive order. However the Gethings produced on an average of 500 tons per man during this past winter.

Gething coal is excellent coal, admitted by



all those who burn it, whether for domestic or steam fuel. With the Swedish investors coming into the field to probe for a possible development that will run into hundreds of millions of dollars in investment and in production of fuel, comes as good news for the northern part of B. C. as well as Canada.

— Alaska Highway News.

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## WORLD GRAIN KING, W. S. SIMPSON DIES

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W. S. Simpson, 76-year-old world's rye king, died in Dawson Creek hospital Friday about an hour after he had suffered a heart seizure at his near-by Hillcrest farm.

A prominent Canadian agriculturist, the late Mr. Simpson added the world's rye crown to an already impressive collection of grain trophies last November 30th, when his own strain, Hurricane, won top honors at the Chicago Grain Exposition.

Mr. Simpson took his agricultural training at Edinburgh, Scotland, and farmed first in Saskatchewan after coming to Canada. He moved to his Hillcrest farm in northern British Columbia in 1930 and has since gained prominence there for his internationally renowned varieties of wheat, coarse grains and garden seed.

The elderly rye king began winning grain awards in Saskatchewan. An outstanding individual figure in developing new varieties of crop plants in Canada, Mr. Simpson recently developed a new potato and a new pea which are proving extremely prolific.

His ability to grow prize pea seed won him his greatest prominence in the Dawson Creek

district, the seed being used by many persons in the north. He had in his possession about 500 awards for grain and garden seed — more than any other single agriculturist on the North American continent.

Writer of a farmer paper column, Mr. Simpson had stated, shortly before his death, that much of the credit belonged to his wife, who had been of great assistance to him. A "close friend, Dr. Sun Yat-Sen, president of China's first republic," invited him once to China under government contract to instruct Chinese farmers in modern agriculture but his wife refused to migrate to the Orient.

He had often described the Peace River block as "the most fertile and heaviest producing field in the whole world when handled properly by those lucky enough to have been blessed with land there."

In addition to his farming experiences, Mr. Simpson was for 40 years a meteorological observer for the department of transport at Larchmont, Sask., and since 1930, at his farm in Hillcrest.



## VARNEY

(By Jack Hackett)

Who came from Sweden when a boy  
And landed in New York or Troy;  
Then hit the trail for Illinois?

Varney!

Who, in the year of ninety-eight,  
Was told about the Golden Gate,  
And hit for Klondyke with his mate?

Varney!

But on the way he hit a snag,  
For some one stole his money bag,  
And he was forced behind to lag,  
And never got there.

He rose each morning with the sun  
And made his way to Edmonton,  
But left again upon the run  
For Athabasca Landing.

The winter time was coming on,  
And Varney had no clothes to don,  
His hob-nailed shoes were nearly gone,  
But he was gritty.

He slept in Izaak Gameau's shack,  
The snow was blowing through the crack,  
But Varney snored upon the rack,  
And let her whistle.

He met a chap from near Slave Lake,  
Who told him there was coin to make  
If he had nerve to undertake  
To walk to Grouard.

Well, Varney had the nerve alright,  
So he packed his kit and flew his kite,  
And by evening he was out of sight,  
Up the icy river.

As he hiked along the frozen track  
With a blacksmith's shop upon his back  
And a frozen jackfish in a gunny sack,  
He soon got weary.

So he camped with old Jack Knife that night,  
And ate his lunch by candle light,  
And stowed the jackfish out of sight  
And the gunny sack was empty.

He hit the trail when daylight came,  
His feet were sore and he was lame,  
But Varney stuck and played the game,  
And landed safely in Grouard.

He rented some old-timer's shack,  
And unstrapped the forge from off his back,  
And split the empty gunny sack  
And made an apron.

And there he pounded horse-shoe nails,  
And mended stoves and pans and pails,  
And lived on moose and beaver tails,  
Just like the natives.

And soon he learnt to talk their tongue,  
He learnt it quick, for he was young;  
And many an Indian song was sung  
While Varney listened.

But Varney was the roving kind,  
And Grouard soon he left behind,  
And went to see what he could find  
At a village on Peace River.

But this was just as bad, or worse,  
And Varney pinched his empty purse,  
And scratched his head and tried to curse  
In English.

But he got a job and took it quick,  
And split some rails for Allie Brick,  
But he hit his foot an awful lick,  
And nearly cut off his toe.

Then back to Grouard Varney came,  
And swore that he would make a name,  
No matter how the money came,  
He'd get it.

First he built a small steamboat,  
But he couldn't get the thing to float,  
And it nearly got poor Varney's goat,  
So he sunk her.

Then he opened up a little store,  
With a pane of glass and home-made door,  
And set a pool table on the floor,  
And hopped to it.

Now, Varney never played much pool,  
But, just the same, he was no fool;  
His aim was straight, his head was cool,  
And he always got the ten ball.

The cash came in both fast and quick,  
And Varney had his choice and pick  
Of all the land, from Sucked Creek  
To Grouard.

Well, day by day the business grew,  
The freighting teams were passing through,  
And Varney took another chew  
Of Copenhagen.

When Varney's business grew so large,  
He didn't know just what to charge  
For a Bully Beef or olemarge,  
He charged the limit.

But all the same he got the biz,  
And it surely was no fault of his  
If Isabelle or little Liz  
Didn't spend their money.

Then he built a larger store,  
His business growing more and more;  
Then into real estate he tore,  
And made a boodle.

Then he was elected mayor,  
And stuck right to that honored chair,  
Till Grouard didn't seem to care  
If she had a mayor or council.

## THE WEALTH OF THE NORTH

(By Jack Hackett)

Can anyone guess the wealth that's stored  
Down near the Arctic line?  
Where Nature guards her golden horde,  
But divulges from time to time.

In ninety-eight the Golden Gate,  
To Alaska's ice-bound shore,  
Was opened wide to the human tide,  
With a maddening rush and roar.

And beneath the soil there are lakes of oil,  
And silver and copper ore,  
And zinc and lead in their granite bed,  
Along each wild lake shore.

Few people know that if they should search  
Along each lake and stream,  
In many a hill and rippling rill,  
They could satisfy their dream.

For the wealth is there for all to share,  
And if each one does his part,  
In years to come great mills will hum  
In what now is the forest's heart.

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## - TO THE IRISH

(By John Sweeney)

It don't make any difference where you reside  
There are Irish right there you can point to  
with pride.

Be it Bishop or Banker or some other stunt,  
You will find the bold Irish right up there  
in front.

(And just to digress, and to show it's no joke,  
Perchance in the future a grand Irish Pope).

There are Sweeney's and Kelly's and Dolan's and  
Doyle's and Carignan's, Laharty's, Murphy's and  
Coyle's, O'Brien's, DeValera's and Spaniards  
and Gauls,

Who twanged Erin's harp in old Tara's halls.

### THRESHING

(By John Sweeney)

In heaven I never want a seat  
If I have got to shovel wheat.  
To tell the truth, upon my soul,  
In hell I'd rather shovel coal.

I'd keep old Limbo good and hot  
And burn the whole infernal lot  
That owns a damned old threshing rig  
And tries to make the profits big.

Each time the griddle took a turn  
I'd make them wriggle like a worm.  
The dirty, lousy, measly ginks.  
They're not one-half as good as Chinks.

Their hours are long, their pay is small,  
No end unto their day at all.  
Go buy a lantern at the store,  
For you have got no time to snore.

Ere you have got your supper downed  
You hear again the whistle sound.  
They blow it long and loud and shrill  
So you can find the threshing mill.

Enough is said, I'll hoist my sail,  
And very soon I'll hit the trail —  
Out where the blue Clearwater flows  
In time I will forget my woes.


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### WHEN THE NORTHERN RIVERS BREAK

(By Jack Hackett)

I stood on the bank of the River Slave  
At a post called Fort Fitzgerald,  
And I thought of the miles of wilderness  
Between me and the outside world.

The ice was solid for miles above,  
And miles and miles below;  
But the earth was bare, except here and there,  
Were little patches of snow.



I had waited there for many days  
Expecting the water to rise,  
Then I looked up-stream, and my breath came  
quick —

I could scarcely believe my eyes.

It looked like mountain rolling down,  
Of water, ice and snow;  
And I looked for a place of safety,  
For the banks where I stood were low.

Then I climbed to a rock of granite  
That stood by the river's bank,  
And could plainly hear the rasp and roar  
As the icebergs rose and sank.

And as I stood on that rock and watched,  
The river appeared to me  
To laugh at the blanket of ice that hid  
Its race to the Arctic Sea.

For it broke its bonds with gigantic strength,  
And shattered, like sheets of glass,  
The fields of ice that had barred its way,  
And refused to let it pass.

Then away like a race horse crazed with fear,  
It raced on its northern course;  
And each moment it seemed to gather speed  
And increase its mighty force.

Then I turned my gaze up-stream again  
To where, just a short time before,  
Lay fields of ice; there now appeared  
Clear water from shore to shore.

And then, oh joy! around the bend  
Came a steamer with flags unfurled;  
And she looked to me like a phantom ship  
From the other side of the world.



But I soon discovered on her forward flag,  
The letters "H. B. C."  
And I said to myself: "Oh joy!" again,  
For she sure looked good to me.

I had spent some time in the frozen North  
And slept beneath a tree:  
It may suit people who love the wilds,  
But it's too close to nature for me!



— ERRATA —

Page	Line	Printed	Should be
8	18 from top	week	day
11	14 from top	Lavatory	Library
44	9 from top	from ten to	ten for
48	8 from top	have	save
58	9 from bottom	started up	stated
102.	11 from top	shing	sing

On page 54, beginning with line 15 from the bottom, the sentence should read: But the chief in his speech said, that the white man is as plentiful as mosquitoes, that we want to live among them, work for them and get along as friends.

